

THE ART QUARTERLY

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THE ART QUARTERLY

Winter, 1939



*Fig. 1. David Vinckboons: River Landscapes
Berlin, Kaiser Friedrich Museum*



*Fig. 2. Abraham Bloemaert: Baptism of Christ
Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada*

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THE STYLE OF DUTCH PAINTING IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

By ADOLPH GOLDSCHMIDT

MOST of the authors who have written about Dutch painting of the seventeenth century emphasize the fact that, in its painting, the Dutch people portrayed itself in the most detailed manner. The creations of the painters reflect the landscape of their homeland and all the doings of rich and poor. It seems miraculous that so relatively small a part of the earth has provided all Europe with art. It is as if the people had consisted entirely of painters, for, traveling through Europe and America today, one finds hundreds and thousands of Dutch paintings in public and private collections.

But is the conquest of the world by Dutch painting really based only upon the fact that the people represented itself and its environment in such great quantity and detail? Does the merit and admirable character of the art rest peculiarly in this self-mirroring? Is it not rather that what primarily gives it its value is the artistic action which does not depend upon but itself forms the object? Because of this artistic action Holland is pictured in every one's mind; to it the rest of the world owes thanks for so rich a supply of vital decoration.

That which seems to us so faithful to reality is in itself already a form of art and in no way a mere photographic representation. The higher the level of the artist's performance, the less are we sometimes conscious of this artistic form. But when we seek to understand it, when we take account of the artistic means by which the effects are attained, we gain a much deeper insight into the views and the tastes of the past, than by being satisfied with the content of the pictures. First of all we recognize the diversity of expression of the successive generations, the alterations of taste and the progress in the individual representation of the visible world. The same things were painted very differently between 1600 and 1630, between 1630 and 1650 and between 1650 and 1680. Each time the same subject shows an entirely different artistic treatment and each period has a different predilection for certain special pictorial problems, and looks for subjects in which they can be solved the most effectively.

Of course, these time limits often overlap; and not every painter follows the general change at the same pace, or submits to it to the same extent. In certain cases painters withdraw altogether from the general trend. We can grasp the style of an epoch as a general phenomenon best by observing the common change in different individualities.

We may observe these different artistic interests as well in the colors as in the manner of lighting, in the composition as well as in the treatment of space. At the turn from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century the painters love variety of color. They seek to render the picture interesting by adjoining as many different colors as possible. If one figure has a yellow dress, the one next to it will possibly appear in blue and the following one in green or red; and the coat or the feather on the hat varies in the same manner. Red houses alternate with green trees or blue water. There is an attempt to render even stone buildings more interesting by adding to them various yellowish, bluish or pinkish architectural parts. The artist takes pains to define an individual object by a distinct color contrast with its neighbor. Moreover we have the impression that the colors of the objects represent their inherent material coloring.

The next generation, on the contrary, prefers a definite unity of color-tone. One homogeneous fundamental color holds the picture together. The landscape painter likes a sun-drenched atmosphere or a light grayish fog to lay its coloring over all things. A golden yellow or gray-green tint neutralizes the many colors and ties together the trees and the ground, the meadows and the water. With Jan van Goyen this conception reaches its artistic climax. The red and blue clothes of the figures in the landscape appear through the vapor as though they were washed out; and in the flags of the boats, where in the works of previous sea painters such as Antum or Hendrik Vroom the national colors had been shown as distinctly as possible, these colors, in paintings by Porcellis or de Vlieger, fade out to a faint indication, overlaid by the gray of the air which unites sky and water in a silvery haze. Even where many colors are demanded, as for instance in the early shooting-company pictures of Frans Hals, in which the orange, red, and blue sashes gleam over black or yellow doublets, an olive green background dominates the picture, for this grayish olive green seeps



*Fig. 3. Jan van Goyen: Landscape with Dunes
Berlin, Kaiser Friedrich Museum*



*Fig. 4. Claes Moeyaert: Ruth and Boas
Berlin, Kaiser Friedrich Museum*



*Fig. 5. Salomon van Ruysdael: Landscape with Farm Yard
Berlin, Kaiser Friedrich Museum*



*Fig. 6. Domenichino: Landscape
Rome, Palazzo Doria*

through all the shadowed parts of the faces and hands, and creates the fluid from which the bright costumes seem to emerge.

The manner in which those landscapes by van Goyen are painted has been called a typically national manner, and rightly so, for nowhere else was it as easy for the artists to discover the uniting force of atmospheric coloring as in Holland, where the humidity of the air so readily produces a shrouding vapor and where the flat plains extend beneath a wide sky which dominates one's impression of the landscape so much more than in mountainous regions, where the silhouettes are pronounced and the distance is cut off.

With this change in the color conception, from multi-colored variety to unity of color-tone from one generation to the other, a change in composition goes hand in hand. At the beginning of the seventeenth century the painters Cornelis Cornelissen of Haarlem or Abraham Bloemaert of Utrecht (Fig. 2) were fond of an animated silhouette. They sought complicated poses in which the figures moved in different directions, cutting across each other in diagonal lines, partly jutting high in the air, partly squatting on the ground, so that in order to follow their outline the eye has to travel up and down, out of the picture and back into it. In the landscapes, too, the trees display a rich ramification of outline against the sky and mountains, and valleys cut up the surface of the picture (Fig. 1).

But after 1620 another taste slowly comes to the foreground. The outlines become compact, the trees are drawn together in rounded masses, the horizon is a simple continuous curve, so that the body of the landscape forms a solid unity with the common color-tone (Fig. 3). A new order also governs the figure groups. They draw together, complementing each other. This more plastic unity was due to the influence of Italian painting. Many Dutch painters who regarded a journey to Italy as indispensable in the course of their studies, Claes Moeyaert (Fig. 4) and Mozes Uytenbroeck for instance, or those who together with the painter from Frankfurt, Adam Elsheimer, formed a northern colony in Rome, learned from Italians such as the Carracci and Domenichino (Fig. 6) to place a greater emphasis on plastic unity, the classical heritage of the Italians which opposed the northern tendency towards pictorial effects. And it is a very remarkable phenom-

enon that this originally Italian taste became the foundation of the very paintings which we are in the habit of regarding as most typically Dutch, such as van Goyen's riverbanks or the groups of trees by young Salomon van Ruysdael (Fig. 5).

It is as if the Dutch painters' eyes had been opened only through contact with the Italians to the simple grandeur of their own native landscape, to the wide plains beneath the infinite sky and to the groups of trees and houses fused together in the vapor of sun-lit mist. And, while effects were previously sought through the accumulation of objects and their narrative wealth, now a single homeland chord is sounded to which all individual tones are subordinate. The spectator is less interested, yet more deeply touched. After the preceding multi-colored paintings, the unifying color-tone first resembles the gray or greenish hue as it was used by Frans Hals at that time, then it changes to a warmer brownish hue and thus forms the clair-obscur of the interiors, in contrast to the grayish yellow atmosphere of the open landscape of van Goyen.

In the third phase of Dutch taste this simple poetic uniformity is again discarded and a more striking richness of form and color is sought. The painters love greater contrasts and stronger effects. In the landscape paintings this becomes noticeable in that the trees again display a richer silhouette. They spread themselves before the sky in delicate ramifications, or they form rows one behind the other, cutting across each other, or leaving openings, so that between the trees in front there appear distant wooded hills or mirroring waters. The leaves are more varied in color: autumnal gold is seen next to still summery green, white trunks of beech trees detach themselves brilliantly from darker masses, and the reddish light of the evening sky often replaces the neutral tone of daylight. The most important landscapes of Jacob van Ruisdael, of the years between 1660 to 1680, owe their appeal to such more effective compositions and colors; and the red brick buildings and shimmering white millstreams of Hobbema (Fig. 10) detach themselves from the green of the woods with quite another effect than that of the paintings of the thirties and forties.

What an enormous difference is there between a still-life of Willem Kalf of the sixteen fifties (Fig 9), where the gold of oranges gleams



*Fig. 7. B. van Bassen: Interior of a Baroque Palace
Detroit Institute of Arts*



*Fig. 8. Pieter Lastman: Susanna and the Elders
Berlin, Kaiser Friedrich Museum*



*Fig. 9. Willem Kalf: Still Life
Detroit Institute of Arts*



*Fig. 10. Meindert Hobbema: The Watermill with the Great Red Roof
Chicago, Art Institute*



*Fig. 11. Peter Claesz: Still Life
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum*



*Fig. 12. Jan Steen: Garden of the Inn
Berlin, Kaiser Friedrich Museum*

next to the silvery shimmer of Lutma vessels and the ruby light of a full wineglass, and the breakfast of a Peter Claesz of the preceding generation (Fig. 11), where the pewter plate with the herring, the brownish loaf of bread, the glass of beer and the tobacco pipe are held together in delicate yellowish and silvery gray tones. These frail, modest lyrics are now confronted with luxurious, grandiloquent poetry.

The contrasts in figural representation are just as striking. When we look over the Amsterdam historical pictures of the thirties and forties (Fig. 8), which are already quite extensively under the influence of Rembrandt, we find that they aim at closed group formation, that those representations are preferred in which the action takes place between two or three people who, being connected with each other, appear in the surrounding landscape or interior as a clearly defined bodily mass with the individual members leaning towards each other in close association; while in the following decades the masses are again dissolved, the figures scatter in space and move in as many different directions as possible, or else, side by side in purposely straight lines, they accentuate a parallel. The later paintings by Adriaen Ostade or the vivacious scenes of Jan Steen (Fig. 12) are striking examples of these tendencies.

If one wants to see in them no more than a return to the first of the periods which we have discussed, one is justified insofar as the changes of style always take place in a sort of pendulum movement, and as each successive generation emphasizes again the principles opposite to those of the preceding one. The former style is never repeated exactly, however, for the attainments of the intervening period can never be completely effaced. Thus the third phase of Dutch painting, despite its return to many of the tendencies of the first, has learned many useful things from the unity of the second. It forms in a way the fusion of plurality and unity, of contrast and equalization, of disconnection and connection in space. And thus it is that this phase undoubtedly represents the zenith of Dutch painting, for it completes by merging them the two different artistic principles postulated in preceding decades. A picture by Jan Steen, such as the Inn-garden in Berlin (Fig. 12), certainly shows a great variety of movement and a rich differentiation in the size and position of the figures, but, never-

theless, the artistic calm is preserved through a simple, ideal outline or through an exact balance of masses. A landscape by Jacob van Ruysdael, notwithstanding its far greater wealth of contrasts, exhales a rhythm and harmony which surpass those of the young Salomon van Ruysdael and which, in the first period of many-colored variety, had hardly yet been sought.

Another change in these phases of development was that of spacial depth. The expedient by which depth was made clear to the spectator during the first decades of the century was a rigid mathematical line construction used by men such as van Delen and van Bassen (Fig. 7); or else it consisted in letting the objects cut over each other, so that they stood one behind the other and, by a change in coloring, seemed to retreat into the distance. This was, however, a staccato retreat without continuity, as seen in Cornelis Cornelissen or Bloemaert; and it showed itself in the followers of Frans Hals, the genre painters Palamedesz, Duyster, Codde, etc., who let their chief figures appear in the foreground in brilliant colors, entirely separated from the figures of the background, which, in their neutralized grayish and brownish hue, melted into a ghostly foil. Often this homogeneously tinted backspace develops a richer graduation of tone than did the monochrome backgrounds of Frans Hals.

The clair-obscur, developed especially by Rembrandt (Fig. 13), created a unity which drew space together in its entirety, but on the other hand renounced a definite clarity of the distances, which was attained only in the third phase by painters such as Pieter de Hooch (Fig. 14) together with a greater color-variety which was not merely a wanton juxtaposition of colors but one which, being spectrally balanced, produced mutual reflexes with which it effected a convincing unity of space.

This last phase is penetrated by another strong Italian influence, often through the mediation of Belgium. Depending on individual inclinations, this influence is either predominantly baroque or classicistic in character. If baroque a more obtrusive movement, assertion and exaggeration is discernible (Fig. 15); if classicistic, a calming down to horizontals and verticals, especially pronounced in the Italianized landscapes, makes itself felt (Fig. 16). A certain sen-



*Fig. 13. Rembrandt: The Visitation
Detroit Institute of Arts*



*Fig. 14. Pieter de Hooch: A Boy Bringing Pomegranates
London, Wallace Coll.*

timentality also can be seen in the preference for reddish evening lights. All these characteristics appear in strata and prove the close connection of the Dutch painters who lived so near each other.

Even Rembrandt, who, as the genius enthroned above the multitude, can not be classified in the fundamental development and who is much more of a giver than a taker, is not independent of the general change. His earliest paintings also are many-colored (Fig. 17), with blue and purple often placed next to yellow and orange, while in the next phase they disappear more and more to make room for a uniform brown. On the other hand, under the influence of the Italian, Caravaggio, a strong sidelight appears which enforces artificially the contrast of the lighted and shaded sides of the objects and, combining with a realistic desire for truth, displays every little irregularity with the greatest prominence. The Utrecht painter Gerard van Honthorst also belonged among the close disciples of Caravaggio (Fig. 19). He sought to augment such effects by the representation of artificial candlelight, and with this brought a new specialty to the Netherlands when he returned there in 1620, a specialty which had so great a success that a whole series of Dutch painters tried their ability on such light effects. The early activity of Rembrandt falls into this epoch, and a painting such as the *Money Changer* in Berlin may be regarded as a miniature solution of Honthorst's problem. From that time on the closed circle of light which illuminates a certain part of the picture dominates the works of Rembrandt. From this starting point he continues in steady improvement, joining the contrasts through ever more delicate intermediaries, and affording the spectator a continually richer view into space by means of the *clair-obscur* (Fig. 20). Thus Rembrandt in the thirties and forties of the seventeenth century is in every respect a representative of the closed style, for in the composition also we observe a change from the sharply animated silhouette, the divergence of movement and accentuation of diagonal directions, such as we find for instance in the portraits of Frans Hals, to closed groups and rounded portraits.

And in his old age the signs of the third phase become very distinct. The colors, taken chiefly from the warm scale of the spectrum—intense yellows, oranges and reds—become again more animated, as in

the so-called "Homer" in the Mauritshuis (Fig. 18); and the compositions become more loose. The closed and rounded groups disperse into rows of figures standing side by side. Thus Rembrandt completed his own cycle in a manner which closely paralleled the phases of Dutch painting in its entirety.

The most far-reaching source of knowledge of the history of civilization, but at the same time the most difficult to observe, is provided by the change in the portrait, far-reaching because it shows us how one desired to see man and how man desired to be seen, difficult because the portrait limited the freedom of the painter. He had to consider the personality of the sitter, and could not make any fundamental changes in his facial or figure traits nor in his dress; he had only the small choice of movement and accessories and, to a very small extent and especially in male portraits, a choice of color. Nevertheless all the changes which we have observed in the other pictures make themselves felt in the portrait also. But a new question adds itself. While all other things are presented to us as passive objects, over which we may cast our aesthetic judgment, the portrait appears as an active subject which wishes to establish a definite relationship with us. This relationship, however, demands a special investigation which would transcend the bounds of the purely aesthetic considerations to which we have limited ourselves here.



*Fig. 15. N. Maes: Two Boys in a Landscape
New York art market*



*Fig. 16. Emanuel de Witte: Interior of a Church
London, National Gallery*



Fig. 17. Rembrandt: *The Wife of Tobias with the Goat*
Amsterdam art market, 1935

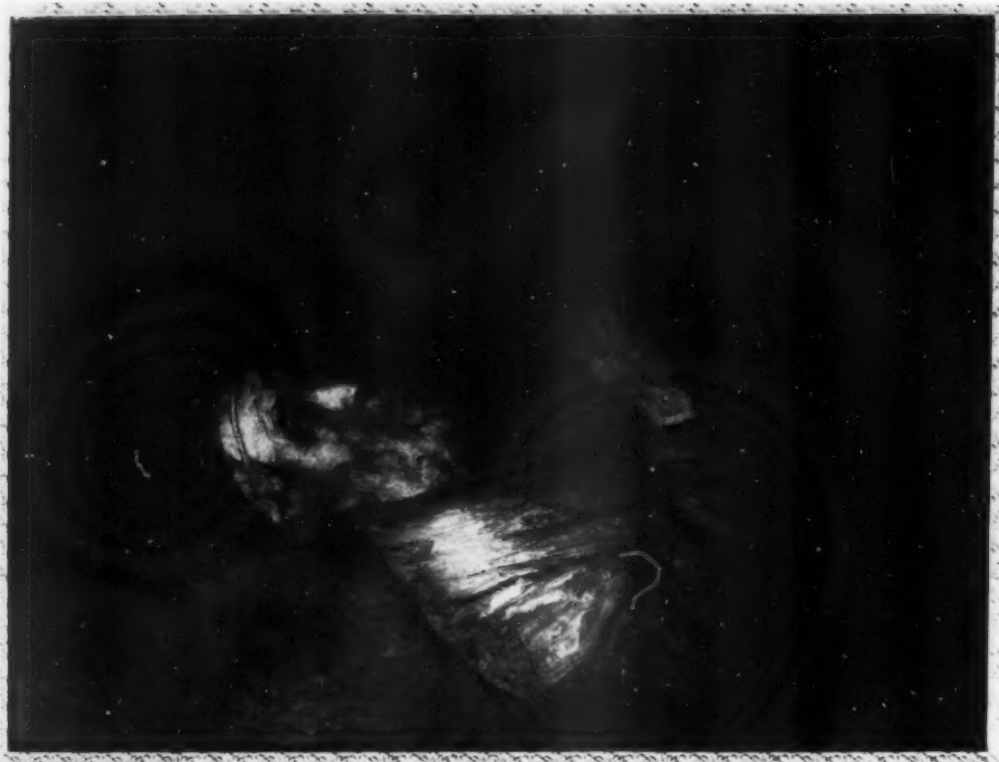


Fig. 18. Rembrandt: *Homer*
The Hague, Mauritshuis, Bredius loan



*Fig. 19. Gerard van Honthorst: The Mocking of Christ
Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada*



*Fig. 20. Rembrandt: Christ Washing the Feet of the Disciples
Chicago, Art Institute*



*Fig. 1. Francesco di Giorgio: Stripping of Christ
Siena, Pinacoteca*

FRANCESCO DI GIORGIO'S STRIPPING OF CHRIST

By ALLEN WELLER

THERE is in the Pinacoteca in Siena (No. 428) a large and disturbing painting of the *Stripping of Christ* (Fig. 1) which, while it has long been placed in association with Francesco di Giorgio, has never really been studied in relation to his career as a whole, nor has its position in fifteenth century Italian art been properly determined. The whole question of Francesco's artistic chronology has been greatly confused due to the assumption almost all scholars have made that he ceased painting entirely by 1477, when we know that he was in the employ of the Duke of Urbino, and after which time it is certainly true that for many years his major activities were in the fields of engineering and architecture. But Francesco returned to Siena as city engineer in 1485, and, while he was frequently employed in Milan, Naples, and other cities (Müntz called him, "véritable condottiere de l'art de l'ingénieur, pour ses services au plus offrant"¹) Siena was his permanent headquarters from then until his death in 1501,² and I think we have ample reason to believe that a number of paintings, clearly by him but not happily grouped with the more familiar works of his youth, must come from the 1480's and 1490's. Of these late paintings, the *Stripping* is one of the most important.

Due to this belief that all Francesco di Giorgio pictures are early, Rossi and Franchi, Jacobsen, Hartlaub, Escher, and Kirschstein³ have all placed the *Stripping* among his youthful works, in spite of the fact that it presents certain qualities very different from the usual Francesco *Madonna and Child* paintings, while Gardner and McComb deny it even to his school, a viewpoint implied by Brandi in his catalogue of the Siena Gallery.⁴ Only Degenhart has ventured to give it a late date,⁵ though Berenson's classification of the work as by Pietro di Domenico after a cartoon by Francesco⁶ would imply that he considered it a late work, for Pietro was eighteen years younger than Francesco. We have, of course, documentary evidence and existent works to show Francesco's late activities as a sculptor,⁷ and the mere

fact that none of the paintings which are clearly late in style happen to be mentioned in documents is no reason why two scholars who have recently written on Francesco, Edgell and Brinton, should say, "he ceased to paint in 1475,"⁸ and, "As a matter of fact, we do not find any panels for church or convent to come from Francesco Martini after he definitely quitted Siena in 1477 and his workshop in that city."⁹

The *Stripping* is a large picture (2.17 x 2.95m.) painted in tempera on panel. It contrasts strongly with the other monumental altarpieces in the Sienese Gallery because of its dry, pale, pasty color scheme, which at first glance makes it look almost like a fresco, and also because of the detail and liveliness of the episodic narrative background. Iconographically, the scene is of considerable interest. Christ was stripped three times: before he was led to Pilate, before the flagellation, and before the crucifixion. This third stripping, which is the subject of our picture, corresponds to the tenth station of the cross, and, while it is not mentioned by the Evangelists, the *Meditations* of the Pseudo-Buonaventura contain a long and pathetic description of it in which the Virgin's sorrow and shame are particularly stressed, and in which the episode of her winding the veil from her head about Christ's loins is emphasized.¹⁰ It is this description, or others like it, which is undoubtedly the literary source of the theme in fifteenth century art.

The subject is found in Byzantine art, which, however, does not admit the pathetic incident of the Virgin covering Christ's nakedness.¹¹ From this source it comes into Italian painting of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, but is rarely met with there later. It is expressed in various compositions, with no standard iconography.¹² Sometimes two distinct scenes are formed from the Pseudo-Buonaventura's highly colored account: in one, the stripping itself takes place; in the other, the Virgin is shown tying her veil about Christ's body. Sometimes the two events occur simultaneously. The theme is nearly lost by the beginning of the fifteenth century in Italy, and the few rare examples to be found are by mediaevalists like Lorenzo Monaco, who has included it in at least one predella panel (Florence, Accademia, No. 438), and occasionally it is found in the predellas of provincial schools like the Bolognese (Rome, Vatican Pinacoteca, No. 102). As

far as I can determine, Francesco's painting is the only monumental treatment of the theme in late fifteenth century art, and he was following no widespread or general Italian tradition in making it the subject of a large altarpiece.

The one medium with which we particularly associate the theme is the German print. These popular devotional works invariably stress the most pathetic and emotion-compelling aspects of the Biblical stories, and the stripping, with its deep yet obvious human appeal, is frequently found among them. Schreiber, in his monumental publication of German woodcuts, catalogues twenty-two different examples of the subject,¹³ and Lehrs publishes eleven others in his catalogue of German, Dutch, and French fifteenth century engravings.¹⁴ Comparisons of Francesco's big painting with the contemporary German prints bring out some very interesting parallels. These can be most adequately studied by placing side by side the Sienese painting and a woodcut, now in the Braunschweig Stadtbibliothek, which Schreiber classifies as south German work of 1490 to 1500 (Fig. 2).¹⁵

It is very easy to think that Francesco must have come in contact with just such German woodcuts as this one. The emphasis upon the cross and the instruments connected with its manufacture in the foreground is similar in both compositions, as is the frieze-like arrangement of the principal characters across the center of the pictures and the inclusion of the crucifixion of the two thieves in the background. None of this associated material is to be found in the earlier Italian predella paintings of the subject. Francesco has created a very different type of artistic unity by doing away with the carpenters in the foreground, bringing the Virgin and her attendants in line with Christ and his tormentors, and greatly reducing the scale, though increasing the narrative details, of the background episodes. In this way we get three clearly defined plans, each one back of and above the other, while in the print everything is kept on the surface, and the equal accent on prominent figures in all four corners gives a diagonal cross pattern to the whole composition. The anonymous German artist includes a figure who lashes the completely naked Christ with a whip, while Francesco resorts to jeering, kicking, and pushing ruffians, and, perhaps due to Sienese reticence in reference to the nude, shows us

Christ with a loin cloth already about his hips, although this is in variance with the account in the Pseudo-Buonaventura.

Strangely enough, the provenience of the painting is not known. It was in the Gallery by 1816, fantastically attributed to Sodoma,¹⁶ but where it came from we do not know. Perhaps the Sienese archives will yet reveal the original location of the picture and the circumstances of its manufacture. The definitely non-Italian quality of the theme makes us wonder if it may actually have been painted at the dictation of some German patron. It is of course well known that there was a strong German element in Siena in the second half of the fifteenth century, attracted there by the University.¹⁷ In the register of scholars who matriculated there from 1470 to 1495, we find among the names of a hundred and thirty foreigners that no fewer than seventy-four were Germans, nearly twice as numerous a group as that from the next best represented country, Spain, while England, France, Sweden, and Hungary contribute only two to four students each. We know also that during these and the immediately preceding years German scribes were employed by various members of the University faculty.¹⁸ The presence of German prints and the possibility of German patrons is thus suggested. A chapel in San Domenico in Siena is dedicated to the German students, and is still filled with their tombs.¹⁹ I have even wondered if our suspiciously German looking *Stripping* could have been painted for this place, but, while the early guide books describe decorations no longer to be found there, the *Stripping* is not among them.

That the painting is really by Francesco di Giorgio I think there can be no doubt, once we are willing to admit that it is fifteen or twenty years later in date than has usually been assumed. If, however, we try to put the work back in the 1470's, we encounter serious difficulties: the presence of the episodic background is unprecedented in conservative Siena at this time, and the large dry surfaces of the figures are quite unlike the richer, more complicated, and more angularly linear figures and draperies of such a comparable picture as the big *Coronation* Francesco painted in 1471 (Siena, Pinacoteca, No. 440), a work which is still largely conceived in the native Sienese tradition, while the rather empty and monotonous detail of the fore-

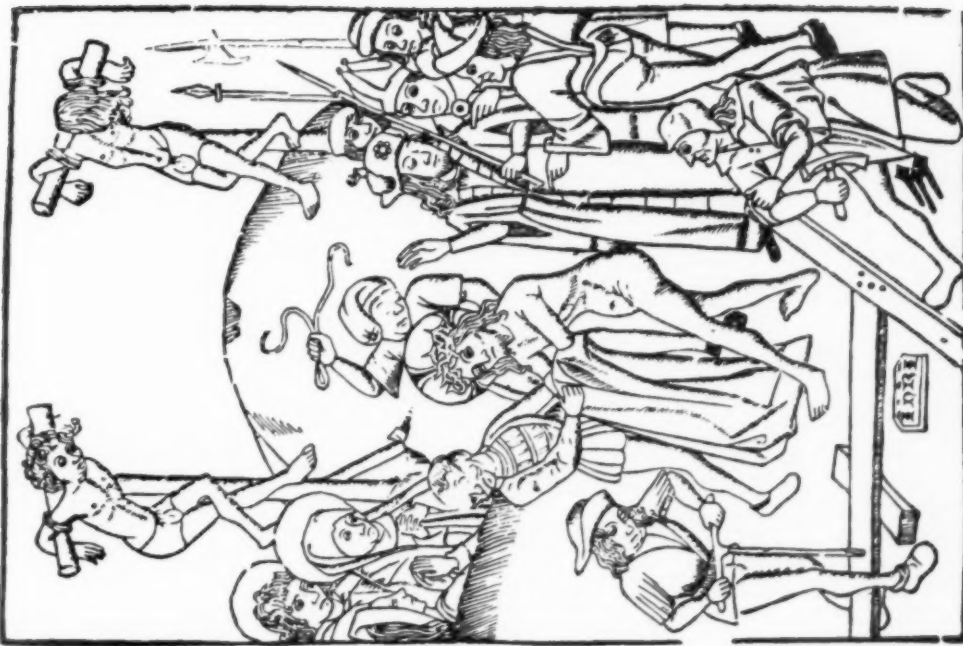


Fig. 2. South German, 1490-1500: Stripping of Christ
Brannschweig, Stadtbibliothek



Fig. 3. Francesco di Giorgio: Stripping of Christ (detail)
Siena, Pinacoteca



Fig. 4. Francesco di Giorgio; *St. Dorothy leading the Christ Child*
London, National Gallery



Fig. 5. Bamberg (?) c. 1470; *St. Dorothy leading the Christ Child*
Berlin, Staatsbibliothek

ground contrasts strongly with the precise naturalism of the 1475 *Nativity* (Siena, Pinacoteca, No. 437), obviously painted by Francesco under strong Florentine influence. Perhaps the very great difference in color between the *Stripping* and these earlier pictures is not so important as one might think, for the *Stripping* seems to be one of those rare fifteenth century tempera paintings which has been untouched by varnish, and the pure, bleached-out quality which is so striking today may actually have been shared by numerous fifteenth century panels whose colors we are used to seeing in much deeper and more luminous versions, due to numerous refinishinges.

But many things remain unchanged in Francesco's style between these two periods: the facial types of the *Stripping* (Fig. 3) still repeat almost unchanged the strongly personal drawing of Francesco's earliest works, executed while he was still the partner of the exquisite but reactionary Neroccio. Berenson's attribution of the painting to Pietro di Domenico²⁰ is not necessary to explain the absence of qualities we find in earlier Francescos, though it is true that the dry treatment of secondary passages suggests the hand of an assistant. Brandi's suggestion that it is by the same hand that executed a Neroccio *Madonna and Saints* in the Galley (No. 287) also seems to be unfounded.²¹ Certainly the picture is uneven in quality, such beautifully and sensitively designed figures as that of the Virgin being almost eclipsed by the unpleasant and exaggerated activity around her. Some of the puffy forms have no real sense of weight, and there are certain singularly inexpressive heads. But there is real compositional beauty to be found in the design of the central group, with its skillful interweaving line, and the sharp rhythmic accents which call attention to the tormented Christ. There is a certain moving grandeur to the whole conception in spite of a good many disagreeable details. We are conscious of two things particularly which divide Francesco's late from his early works: the sculptor into which he had largely developed by 1490 makes him much more emphatic in his treatment of form than he had ever been before, and instead of the dominant Florentine influence which imparts a non-Sienese vigor to many of the early works, a new infusion from Umbrian sources, which comes particularly from Signorelli, is responsible for the new type of background, for a cer-

tain energy in a new athletic type of pose, and for a new quality of mass movement in dense groups of figures.

There is documentary evidence of personal contact between Francesco and the eleven-years-younger Signorelli: in 1485, when Francesco was still in the service of Duke Guidobaldo of Urbino, Signorelli, representing his native Cortona, was sent to Gubbio, where Francesco happened to be at the moment, to discuss with him certain matters pertaining to the plans for the church of Santa Maria del Calcinaio, which Francesco was designing for the Cortonese.²² Twelve years later, in 1497, Signorelli was working at Monte Oliveto Maggiore, twenty-five miles from Siena, on the eight San Benedetto scenes which point the way so clearly to the masterpieces at Orvieto. The next year Signorelli was in Siena itself, where he painted the two wings of the Bicchi altarpiece for Sant' Agostino, now in the Berlin Museum.²³ It is easy to understand why Signorellesque influence would have been strong in Siena in these years, and a comparison of the *Stripping* with the Bicchi panels reveals a very similar sense of sculptural construction of the figure, and a massive, even-surfaced swing of drapery common to both pictures. Nor is the *Stripping* an isolated example of Signorelli influence in Francesco's late works: the fierce and swarthy shepherds of the great San Domenico *Nativity* are clearly Signorellesque, and there is the possibility that the two artists collaborated in the puzzling series of Heroes and Heroines which was apparently painted by Signorelli, Francesco, Neroccio, the so-called Griselda Master, and Pacchiarotto, and which seemingly dates from 1497 to 1500.²⁴ The strongly Umbrian characteristics of the background, in landscape, trees, and figures alike, make us think not only of Signorelli, but particularly of Pintoricchio, who only a few years later, in 1502, was to start work on his masterpieces in the Piccolomini Library in Siena, many of which derive much of their interest from just such narrative backgrounds as that employed here.²⁵

As a footnote to the subject of possible influence on Francesco's iconography by German prints, it is interesting to note that the *Stripping* is not the only one of his works in which this seems to be present. One of the earliest paintings by the artist we have is a small panel (Fig. 4) in the National Gallery, London, *St. Dorothy leading the*

Christ Child (no. 1682, 0.33 x 0.22 m.), a picture which may be dated about 1465, when Francesco still betrays many of the characteristics of Vecchietta, though already there is a certain warmth and feeling which is very rare in the older artist, who is apt to be somewhat wooden when he is not at his best, his works then being marked by a peculiar austerity. The theme of the little panel is a very unusual one to encounter in fifteenth century Italian art. St. Dorothy was never very popular in Italy, but was a favorite with north European artists. Early Italian painters sometimes included her in altarpieces which brought a number of saints together (an example in Siena is the Ambrogio Lorenzetti *Santa Petronilla* polyptych) and she appears in Venetian art, where the value of a saint whose attribute is a basket of flowers is obvious. But the charming theme of St. Dorothy leading the Christ Child, an apocryphal development of her story as told in the Golden Legend, is distinctly a northern, particularly a German one, and it is hard to think of any other Italian version of the subject. Many German prints of the period show it to us: no fewer than thirty-nine woodcuts and seven engravings of fifteenth century German origin have been published,²⁶ and while these represent numerous iconographical variations, some of them are surprisingly close to our Francesco panel. A woodcut now in the Berlin Staatsbibliothek (Fig. 5), which was perhaps made in Bamberg about 1470,²⁷ shows the sort of work which may very well have been a prototype for Francesco's painting. Of course we should remember that Italian fifteenth century prints are today rare in comparison to similar German work of the same period, so that actually we know less about popular Italian devotional art than we do German. But when we find an artist like Francesco employing themes which are nearly unique among his artistic contemporaries, but which are frequent in this other medium, it seems legitimate to assume some definite contact between them.

¹ E. Müntz, *Histoire de l'art pendant la renaissance*, Paris, 1889-1895, II, p. 404.

² Not in 1502, as is almost universally stated. Francesco died between 13 November 1501, when there is a recorded payment to him (cf. A. Pantanelli, *Di Francesco di Giorgio Martini*, Siena, 1870, p. 140) and 29 November 1501, when he was buried at the Osservanza (cf. E. Bulletti, "Dov'è sepolto Francesco di Giorgio?," *Rassegna d'Arte Senese*, XVI, 1923, pp. 64-68, who, however, incorrectly interprets the year as 1507).

³ P. Rossi and A. Franchi, "Le pitture di Francesco di Giorgio Martini," *Bullettino Senese di Storia Patria*, IX, 1902, pp. 221-222; E. Jacobsen, *Das Quattrocento in Siena*, Strassburg, 1908, p. 91; G. F. Hartlaub, "Beiträge zu Francesco di Giorgio," *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst*, XXVIII, 1917, p. 63; K. Escher, *Malerei der renaissance in Italien*, Berlin, 1922, p. 184; M. Kirschstein, *Siena*, Munich, 1923, p. 304.

⁴ E. G. Gardner, *The Story of Siena and San Gimignano*, London, 1902, p. 119; A. McComb, "The Life and Works of Francesco di Giorgio," *Art Studies*, II, 1924, p. 25; C. Brandi, *La Regia Pinacoteca di Siena*, Rome, 1933, pp. 194-195.

⁵ B. Degenhart, "Francescos di Giorgio entwicklung als Zeichner," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, IV, 1935, pp. 121-122.

⁶ B. Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance*, Oxford, 1932, p. 203.

⁷ The two candelabra-bearing half-figures of *angioletti* were made for the high altar of Siena Cathedral in 1489-1490 (cf. P. Bacci, "Comentarii dell'arte senese," *Bullettino Senese di Storia Patria*, n. s. III, 1932, pp. 111-112); the two standing figures of angels on the same altar were made from 1495 to 1497 (cf. G. Milanesi, *Documenti per la storia dell'arte senese*, Siena, 1854-1856, II, p. 463, III, pp. 305-306, and S. Borghesi and E. Banchi, *Nuovi documenti per la storia dell'arte senese*, Siena, 1898, pp. 358-359. In spite of Bacci's recent publication of new documents, scholars have consistently confused contemporary notices of these works).

⁸ G. H. Edgell, *A History of Sienese Painting*, New York, 1932, p. 251. Elsewhere (p. 245) Edgell says, however, that the San Domenico *Nativity* "cannot be as early as that date."

⁹ S. Brinton, *Francesco di Giorgio Martini of Siena*, London, 1935, II, p. 50.

¹⁰ Cf. the fourteenth century English translation of the Pseudo-Bonaventura, ed. J. M. Cooper, in the publications of the Early English Text Society, vol. 60, London, 1875, pp. 19-20.

¹¹ This tradition reaches its final expression in the superb *Espolios* of El Greco.

¹² For the iconography of the scene, see: X. B. de Montault, "Iconographie du Chemin de la Croix," *Annales Archéologiques*, XXIII, 1863, pp. 244-248; A. Jameson, *The History of Our Lord*, London, 1872, II, pp. 124-126; G. Millet, *Recherches sur l'iconographie de l'évangile*, Paris, 1916, pp. 384-385; E. Sandberg-Vavalà, *La Croce dipinta italiana*, Verona, 1929, p. 278.

¹³ W. L. Schreiber, *Handbuch der holz- und metallschnitte des XV. Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig, 1926-1930, 8 vols.

¹⁴ M. Lehrs, *Geschichte und Kritischer Katalog des deutschen, niederländischen und französischen kupferstichs im XV. Jahrhundert*, Vienna, 1908-1934, 9 vols.

¹⁵ Schreiber, *op. cit.*, I, p. 118, no. 363, 234 x 157 cm.

¹⁶ L. De Angelis, *Ragguaglio del nuovo Istituto delle Belle Arti*, Siena, 1816, p. 38, no. 13. The attribution to a follower of Francesco di Giorgio was first proposed in 1866 by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, ed. 1, III, p. 67.

¹⁷ Cf. L. Zdekauer, *Lo Studio di Siena nel Rinascimento*, Milan, 1894, pp. 180-191.

¹⁸ The two books in the Osservanza which contain miniatures by Francesco were copied by a certain *Conradus Alamanum* (cf. E. Bulletti, "Il Museo Aurelio Castelli dell'Osservanza," *Rassegna d'Arte Senese*, XVII, 1924, pp. 47-50).

¹⁹ Cf. L. von Ebengreuth, "I sepolcri degli scolari tedeschi in Siena," *Bullettino Senese di Storia Patria*, III, 1896, pp. 9-21, 299-326, V, 1898, pp. 52-62. Most of the tombs are of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but there are some fifteenth century examples, and another in the Sapienza church as well.

²⁰ Cf. note 6.

²¹ Cf. note 4.

²² R. Vischer, *Signorelli und die italienischer Renaissance*, Leipzig, 1879, p. 338.

²³ Cf. L. Dussler, *Signorelli (Klassiker der Kunst)*, New York, 1927, pp. 74-75.

²⁴ Baltimore, Walters Coll., *Sulpicia*; Budapest, Gallery, *Tiberius*; Florence, Bargello, *Scipio*; Milan, Poldi-Pezzoli Museum, *Barbara*; New York, S. H. Kress Coll., *Claudia*; New York, Scott and Fowles, *Joseph (?)*; Richmond, Cook Coll., *Alexander*. Cf. B. Berenson, "Quadri senza casa," *Dedalo*, XI, 1931, p. 753.

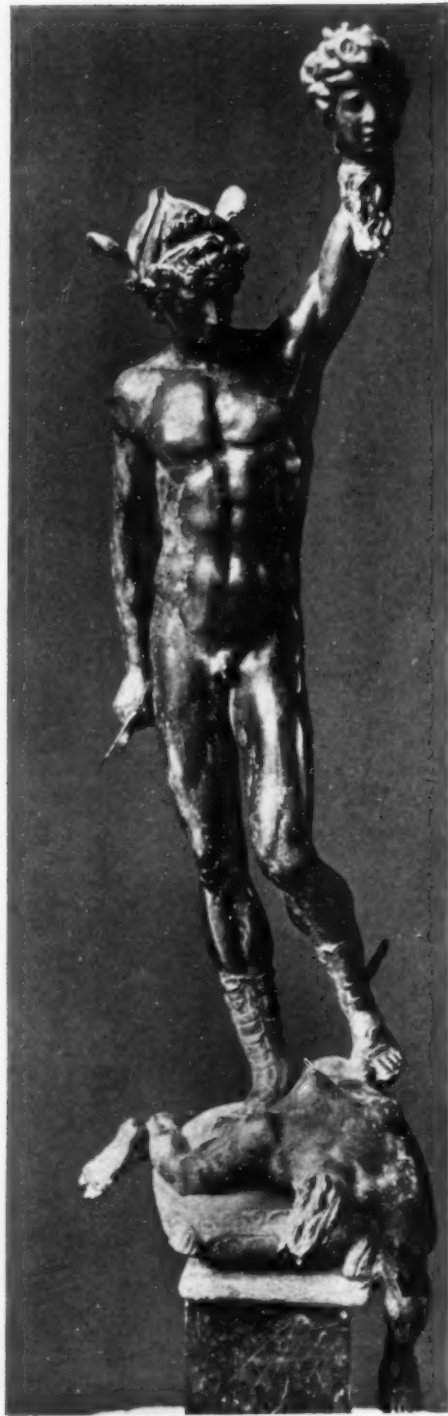
²⁵ R. Hamann, *Die Früh-renaissance der italienischen malerei*, Jena, 1909, p. 264, sees the influence of Mantegna in the orange trees back of the figures and in the small stones in the foreground. It is certain that North Italian art played its part in the formation of Francesco's style: early in his career he was affected by the miniaturist Girolamo da Cremona.

²⁶ Schreiber, *op. cit.*; Lehrs, *op. cit.*

²⁷ Schreiber, *op. cit.*, III, p. 81, No. 1398 a, 187 x 121 cm.



*Fig. 1. Benvenuto Cellini: Jupiter Bronze Statuette
Detroit Institute of Arts*



*Fig. 2. Benvenuto Cellini: Persus
Bronze Model
Florence, Museo Nazionale*

TWO UNKNOWN BRONZE STATUETTES BY CELLINI

By W. R. VALENTINER

THE autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini, rightly famous as an introduction into the cultural world of the High Renaissance, is of rare value to the art historian also as a source of knowledge regarding the conception and execution of the sculpture of this epoch. Through Cellini's narrative we are made acquainted with the history of some of his works from the moment of their commission until they were finished to the last detail. These details are often of exceptional interest to us, for no one else except the artist himself could explain them.

Cellini's description of the casting of the *Perseus*, which he executed for Duke Cosimo I of Florence from 1545-1554, is one of the most famous examples. But no less important is his account of the sculptures he did shortly before this when he was in the service of Francis I in France (1540-1545). He dwells at considerable length on the statue of *Jupiter*, the first of twelve statues in silver which were ordered by the King as candelabra for his dining room, of which the *Jupiter* alone seems to have been carried to completion.

The two bronze statuettes published here are probably models for this figure. One (Figs. 3, 6, 10) is in a private collection in New York, the other (Figs. 1, 4, 7) is a recent acquisition of the Detroit Institute of Arts.¹ Before we enter upon a stylistic discussion, it is rewarding to follow Cellini's description of the lost silver statue of *Jupiter*, for it brings out certain details valuable in an identification of these models. The description, which has to be compiled from shorter descriptions sandwiched between the author's adventurous stories of his sojourn in France, is entertaining and at the same time instructive enough to be quoted extensively.

After Cellini's report of the order for the statues of six gods and six goddesses, each to be approximately the height of the King himself, he goes on to say that he first executed four models, about two-thirds of a cubit each in height, for the statues of *Jupiter*, *Juno*, *Apol-*

lo and Vulcan. The material of these small models, from which life-size models in terracotta were executed, was wax. Such wax models were frequently cast in bronze by Renaissance sculptors by the *cire perdue* process and were thus preserved for their own future use. A good number of them are still in existence by even such great masters as Donatello, Antonio Pollaiuolo and Michelangelo. Two well known models of Cellini's *Perseus*, one in wax, the other (Fig. 2) in bronze cast in *cire perdue*, are preserved in the Museo Nazionale in Florence. The two statuettes here discussed, especially that in Detroit, also show in the rough sketchy surface of certain parts (such as the treatment of the hair shown in Fig. 7) all the earmarks of *cire perdue* bronzes.

"In this while," Cellini writes, "the King returned to Paris; whereupon I went to him at once, taking my models with me, and my two prentices, Ascanio and Pagolo. On perceiving that the King was pleased with my work, he commissioned me to execute the Jupiter in silver of the height above described. . . . ²

"After filling up my own lodgings in the castle and the workshop with all conveniences for carrying on my business, and putting my household upon a most respectable footing, I began at once to construct three models exactly the size which the silver statues were to be. These were Jupiter, Vulcan and Mars. I moulded them in clay, and set them well up on irons; then I went to the King who disbursed three hundred pounds weight of silver, if I remember rightly, for the commencement of the undertaking."

After Cellini has related some "knaveish tricks" of the Cardinal of Lorraine from the retinue of the King, who did not give him enough salary, he continues: "I prefer to dwell on matters of greater moment. When I returned to Paris, the great favour shown me by the King made me a mark for all men's admiration. I received the silver and began my statue of Jupiter. Many journeymen were now in my employ and the work went onward briskly day and night; so that by the time I had finished the clay models of Jupiter, Vulcan and Mars, and had begun to get the silver statue forward, my workshop made already a grand show."

From the account of an unexpected visit to his studio by the King we learn that Cellini executed the *Jupiter* statue in different sections: "Everybody in my house was busily employed so that the unexpected entrance of his Majesty took me by surprise. The first thing he saw on coming into the great hall was myself with a huge plate of silver in my hand, which I was beating for the body of my Jupiter; one of my men was finishing the head, another the legs; and it is easy to imagine what a din we made between us. It happened that a little French lad was working at my side, who had just been guilty of some trifling blunder. I gave the lad a kick, and, as my good luck would have it, caught him with my foot exactly in the fork between his legs, and sent him spinning several yards, so that he came stumbling up against the King precisely at the moment when his Majesty arrived. The King was vastly amused, but I felt covered with confusion."

While Cellini was at work on the *Jupiter*, he found that he had plenty of silver to spare. He conceived the idea of casting the large model in bronze, and instructed French workmen to do it. "We constructed an admirable little furnace for the casting of the bronze, got all things ready, and baked our moulds; to those French masters undertaking the Jupiter, I said: 'I do not think you will succeed in the poor Jupiter, because you have not provided sufficient vents beneath for the air to circulate; therefore you are but losing your time and trouble'." The French artists, however, insisted they were right. The result was that the casting was a failure.

Cellini started now to work on the pedestal of the silver *Jupiter*. "I began to cast the pedestal which I wrought very richly in bronze, covered with ornaments, among which was a bas relief representing the rape of Ganymede, and on the other side Leda and the Swan. On casting this piece it came out admirably."

We come now to the amusing story of the King's inspection of the finished statue. Cellini had moved it to Fontainebleau where the King was then residing. The author gives us here for the first time an idea of the posture in which Jupiter was represented and mentions the attributes he had given him. He makes an interesting remark about the lighting of sculpture: he realizes that his statue looked much better in the evening than in the daytime because at night it was arti-

ficially lighted from above, whereas the daytime light must have been side light. Also, it made a much better effect than the other statues standing nearby, which were artificially lighted from below.³

Cellini had to compete with another Italian sculptor who had brought from Rome a series of bronze casts after antique sculptures. These were placed in a handsome row in the same gallery where Cellini had to show his *Jupiter*. The sculptor writes:

When I saw that grand parade, so artfully planned, I said to myself: 'This is like running the gauntlet; now may God assist me.' I placed the statue, and having arranged it as well as I was able, waited for the coming of the King. The Jupiter was raising his thunderbolt with the right hand in the act to hurl it; his left hand held the globe of the world. Among the flames of the thunderbolt I had very cleverly introduced a torch of white wax. Now Madame d'Etampes detained the King till nightfall, wishing to do one of two mischiefs, either to prevent his coming, or else to spoil the effect of my work by its being shown off after dark; but as God has promised to those who trust in Him, it turned out exactly opposite to her calculations; for when night came, I set fire to the torch, which, standing higher than the head of Jupiter, shed light from above and showed the statue far better than by daytime.

When the King appeared, I made my prentice Ascanio push the Jupiter toward his Majesty. As it moved smoothly forward (Cellini had fitted casters to his statue), my cunning in its turn was amply rewarded, for this gentle motion made the figure seem alive; the antiques were left in the background, and my work was the first to take the eye with pleasure. The King exclaimed at once: 'This is by far the finest thing that has ever been seen.' . . . Madame d'Etampes (the mistress of the King) said boldly: 'One would think you had no eyes! Don't you see all those fine bronzes from the antique behind there? In those consists the real distinction of this art, and not in that modern trumpery.' . . . Then the King advanced, and the others with him. After casting a glance at the bronzes, which were not shown to advantage from the light being below them, he exclaimed: 'Whoever wanted to injure this man has done him a great service; for the comparison of these admirable statues demonstrated the immeasurable superiority of his work in beauty and in art. Benvenuto deserves to be made much of, for his performances do not merely rival, but surpass the antique.' In reply to this, Madame d'Etampes observed that my Jupiter would not make anything like so fine a show by daylight; besides, one had to consider that I had put a veil upon my statue to conceal its faults. I had indeed flung a gauze veil with elegance and delicacy over a portion of my statue, with the view of augmenting its majesty.



*Fig. 3. Benvenuto Cellini: Bronze Statuette
New York, Private Collection*



*Fig. 4. Benvenuto Cellini: Jupiter Bronze Statuette
Detroit Institute of Arts*



*Fig. 5. Benvenuto Cellini: Perseus
Bronze Statue
Florence, Loggia dei Lanzi*



*Fig. 6. Benvenuto Cellini: Jupiter
Bronze Statuette
New York, Private Collection*

This, when she had finished speaking, I lifted from beneath, uncovering the handsome genital members of the god; then tore the veil to pieces with vexation. She imagined I had disclosed those parts of the statue to insult her. The King noticed how angry she was, while I was trying to force some words out in my fury; so he wisely spoke, in his own language, precisely as follows: 'Benvenuto, I forbid you to speak; hold your tongue, and you shall have a thousand times more wealth than you desire.'

It follows from this description of the statue that *Jupiter* was represented nude, standing, in the posture of striding forward. The right arm was raised high, the left must have been lowered in accordance with the Renaissance idea of contraposto. The right hand held the thunderbolt, the left a globe.

The position of the two statuettes which we believe to be the models agrees with this description, except that the left hand holds a piece of drapery stretching out horizontally behind the figure's back.⁴

This strange motive of breaking the rear elevation of the figure by a horizontal line is repeated in a somewhat similar fashion in the front view of the *Perseus* statue in the Loggia dei Lanzi (Fig. 5). It is hardly accidental that Perseus' sword is placed at exactly the same height, horizontally, and with about the same length in proportion to the body, as the drapery of the *Jupiter*. However, we can easily understand that the artist changed this motive in the completed statue of the *Jupiter*, for it is in no way called for by the subject as is Perseus' sword. Cellini replaced the awkward looking drapery by a globe, which made a better balance for the thunderbolt in the other hand.

The Detroit statuette (Fig. 1) seems to illustrate especially well the impression which, according to Cellini, one would receive when the statue was put in motion toward the spectator. It would then seem, indeed, as if the god were striding towards the spectator, as it did when the King was visiting the artist.

It is hardly necessary to mention that the two bronze statuettes are about the same height as the wax models described by Cellini. A cubit being 18 inches, two-thirds of a cubit would be 12 inches, which is nearly the height of the Detroit statue.⁵ But a more impor-

tant factor is the similarity in style with the few authenticated bronze statuettes by Cellini.

In one of the niches on the pedestal of the *Perseus* the artist has represented Jupiter in a pose very similar to that of our two bronze statuettes (Fig. 5). This figure however, is draped. The left hand holds the cloak while the uplifted right arm with the thunderbolt is bent in such a manner as to conform with the niche in which the figure is placed. For these reasons it is easier to compare the *Jupiter* statuettes with the nude bronze model for the *Perseus* (Fig. 2).

We find that the elongated proportions of the body, ending in a comparatively small head with small features, are very similar in both. Although the body of the *Jupiter* is less youthful than that of *Perseus*, the outlines on both sides of the figure are very much alike (Figs. 1 and 2). The exaggerated curves of the calves and the narrow ankles are characteristic. The modeling of the torso also speaks for the same hand. The artist is very fond of dividing the body up in separate muscular sections, but he draws a strongly marked line vertically down the centre of the body from the neck to the navel. Seen in profile (Figs. 9 and 10), there is a complete agreement between the *Perseus* model and our bronze statuettes in the forward and backward movement of the body.

The head of the *Jupiter* is obviously derived from classical statues. But that Cellini was especially fond of the type is shown by the fact that he used it not only for his representations of Jupiter, but also for the *Oceanos* on the salt cellar in Vienna (Fig. 8), which he executed at the same time for Francis I. Although the head of the Detroit statuette (Fig. 7) is not worked out in detail as is that on the salt cellar, there is much similarity between the two.

The two statuettes of *Jupiter* differ so much in detail that we may be certain they are cast from different wax models. Cellini executed slowly and with many changes from the original conception the works for which he received orders. We observe this in the case of the *Perseus* as well as in the present instance, and also in another bronze convincingly attributed to Cellini, the inkstand (or salt cellar) crowned by the figures of *Virtue Overcoming Vice*.

Two versions of this work exist, one in the collection of A. von



Fig. 7. Benvenuto Cellini: Jupiter
Detail of Fig. 1

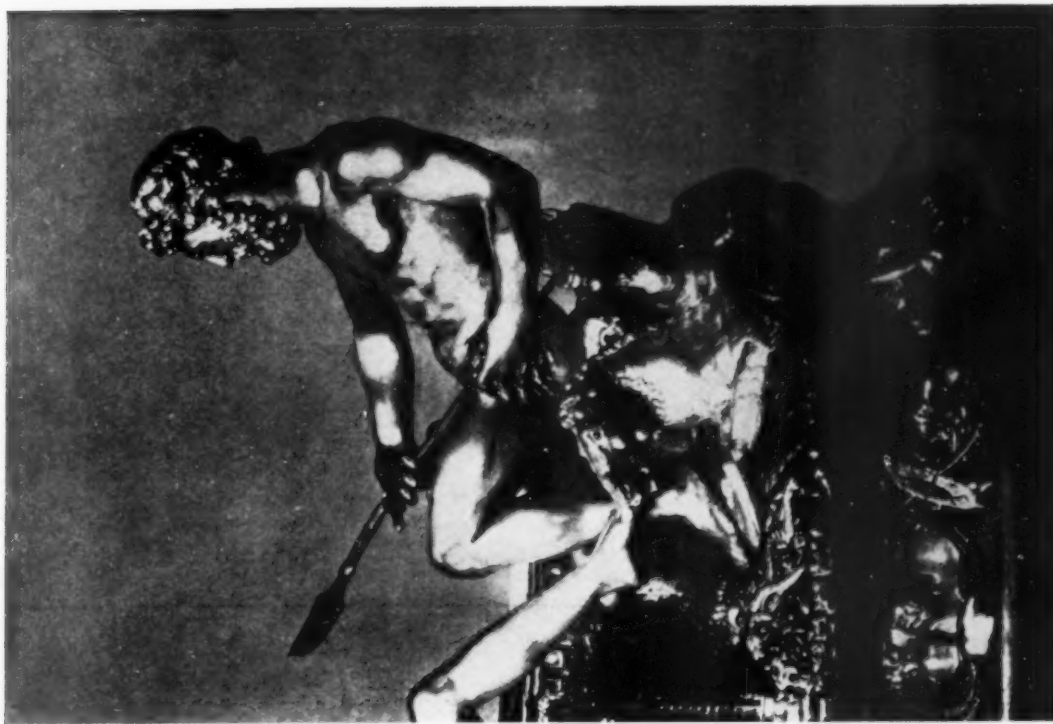


Fig. 8. Benvenuto Cellini: Oceanos
Detail from Salt Cellar, Vienna, Hofmuseum



*Fig. 9. Benvenuto Cellini: Perseus (profile)
Bronze Model
Florence, Museo Nazionale*



*Fig. 10. Benvenuto Cellini: Jupiter
Bronze Statuette
New York, Private Collection*

Rothschild in Vienna, the other in the Henry Goldman collection in New York. Four examples of the crowning group are known (two in the Berlin museum, one in the Widener collection, and one in the Frick collection), of which at least two are taken from different models, while the figure of *Vice* appears separately in a bronze in the Victoria and Albert Museum.⁶

The name of Benvenuto Cellini has been so popular for centuries that it is not to be wondered at if it has been attached without reason to numerous works in the many fields in which he was active. Modern criticism has become rightly skeptical of many older attributions, even of those which were still upheld by Eugène Plon, who wrote the first reliable publication on the artist (1883). In my belief none of the bronze statuettes in American collections but those just mentioned rightly bears his name, not even the fine figure of *Neptune* in the George Blumenthal collection in New York,⁷ which is not Florentine, but Venetian, and to my mind a typical work of Jacopo Sansovino.

Cellini's bronze statuettes are among the most satisfactory expressions of his art, which is more convincing in small objects than in the large sculpture of world fame. A goldsmith by nature, he could not help but see the outside world in a small and detailed way. The bigger his sculptures, the more overworked and lifeless they are. The works of which he was most proud, such as the *Perseus*, the *Nymph of Fontainebleau* (Louvre), the bust of *Cosimo I* (Museo Nazionale, Florence) and the bust of *Bindo Altoviti* (Gardner Museum, Boston) are not even upon the level of the work of other contemporary masters of less popularity such as Giovanni da Bologna, not to speak of Michelangelo, whom even Cellini, with all his conceit was intelligent enough to consider his superior. These larger works suffer from obvious defects. He was seldom able to conceive large compositions and to subordinate to the whole the mass of detail he was so fond of introducing. The figures are usually stiff and disconnected in movement, frigid and unsensuous. In spite of a marvelously rendered anatomy, they lack the life with which every inch of Michelangelo's figures is filled. Cellini is not the genius that people like to think him, although he possessed an extraordinary versatility and virtuosity. He

is a typical example of the fact that the most famous men in history are not always the greatest. His fame is to a very large extent built upon his fascinating autobiography, which rightly has a place in world literature. But as a fascinating personality and as a type of sixteenth century life and taste he has a permanent place in art; and in bronzes such as these he shows himself in one of his happiest aspects.

¹ The Detroit Statuette comes from the Huldshinsky collection in Berlin and is described in the sales catalogue as "Florentine, XVI Century." It has been presented to the Detroit Museum by Mrs. Allan Shelden and is exhibited at Alger House in Grosse Pointe.

² For the quotations I used the translation of Cellini's autobiography by J. A. Symonds, London, 1889.

³ Cellini makes a similar remark regarding lighting in describing his bust of Bindo Altoviti (now in the Gardner Museum in Boston). He complains that it was placed by its first owner in a room in which the light was ruinous to the right impression of the work; the windows were very low, so that the bust was lighted from below instead of from above.

⁴ This refers only to the statuette in New York private possession, which I believe to be the second version. The drapery of the Detroit statuette is less deliberately arranged and does not reach so far across the body.

⁵ If measured to the top of the right arm it measures $11\frac{3}{4}$ inches, if we add the thunderbolt which the god undoubtedly held originally, it would bring it to 12 inches. I cannot verify the measurements of the other model which I saw last in 1914 in the collection of Mrs. Samuel Untermyer in New York.

⁶ Compare W. Bode, *Italian Bronze Statuettes of the Renaissance*, Vol. 2, and W. R. Valentiner, *The Henry Goldman Collection*, 1922.

⁷ Exhibited in the Exhibition of Master Bronzes in Buffalo, 1937.

SOME FRENCH DRAWINGS FROM THE BIRON COLLECTION

By H. W. WILLIAMS, JR.

MOST of the great connoisseurs and collectors of the later nineteenth-century are dead and their collections dispersed or preserved in public museums. Among the few living collectors of that generation is the Marquis de Biron, now nearly eighty years of age. As a youth of twenty in the 1880's he became interested in drawings, and started the collection which became his lifelong enthusiasm. He concentrated his activities on the eighteenth century, a period not then in vogue, and gathered piece by piece a collection of French and Italian drawings noteworthy for its quality.

A friend of many members of the Parisian art world, Biron was in the habit of resorting almost nightly to Voisin's restaurant where an informal club-like gathering of kindred spirits met to talk over their most recent prizes, discoveries, and problems of connoisseurship. Among this group were such well-known artists and collectors as Madrazo, Beurdeley, Bardini, Fortuny, and Sem, the caricaturist.

Biron's entire collection of French eighteenth-century drawings, which included many fine examples of the important artists of the period, was sold at auction in 1914. Through his dealer friends he bought back at the sale a small number of drawings including one each by Watteau, Saint Aubin, Pajou, and Prud'hon. These four drawings and another by Marot, which Biron subsequently acquired, form the material for this account. They are among the drawings included in the Biron collection which has recently been purchased by the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The earliest of these drawings (Fig. 1) is a ceiling design by Daniel Marot the elder, a French Huguenot who, after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, took refuge in Holland, and later, in the train of William of Orange, visited England.¹ Marot, primarily an architect, had a high reputation both in Holland and England. In each country he was entrusted with important commissions, such as the Treves Saal in the Hague and the 'State Rooms' at Hampton Court.



*Fig. 1. Daniel Marot, the Elder: Design for ceiling decoration. Pen and sepia wash.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art*



Fig. 2, Jean Antoine Watteau: Luigi Riccoboni. Red and black crayon on white paper, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art



Fig. 3, Jean Antoine Watteau: Le Mezzetin
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

Through his series of etched designs of ornament Marot also exerted a considerable influence on the decorative crafts. One of these sets entitled, *Nouveaux Livre de Placfond inventé et Gravés par D: Marot Architecte du feu Guillaume III Roy de la Grande Bretagne fait a la Haye avec Privilligio des Etats Generaux D'Hollande et Weestfrisse*, shows one design very similar to the Biron drawing both in composition and in the use of like decorative motives.² The similarities between the print and the drawing are so strong that it is probable that they represent work of the same period. Although it is impossible to fix the date of the execution of this set of prints of ceiling designs, it was included in a collection of Marot's ornament work published in 1703, and that at least establishes the latest date at which it could have been made.³ Thus, the drawing may also tentatively be dated around this time.

It is a long step from the limited abilities of Daniel Marot to the dazzling genius of Antoine Watteau whose melancholic crayon study for *Le Mezzetin* (Fig. 2) is unquestionably the most important French drawing in the Biron collection.⁴ This masterly portrait of the actor, Luigi Riccoboni, as Mezzetin, is a detail study for the Metropolitan's painting (Fig. 3) which was acquired in 1934.⁵ It is obviously taken from life, and shows Watteau's genius as a draughtsman. The condition of the drawing is unusually fine, for apparently no off-set impression has ever been taken from it, and the modeling of the head is as fresh and sharp as the day it was made. When one considers how rare it is to find the preparatory drawing and the finished picture under one roof, this reunion of Watteau's superb study with the famous painting is a cause for rejoicing.

An entirely different tempo is struck in Gabriel de Saint Aubin's sprightly little sketch, *Homage to Marie Antoinette*, (Fig. 4) which epitomizes the carefree spirit of the French rococo.⁶ This drawing, made in 1770, almost forty years after Watteau's premature death, celebrates the marriage of Marie Antoinette to the Dauphin, a union that was celebrated with gaiety throughout France. The feverish enthusiasm reached its height in Paris where a festival spirit made itself manifest, on one hand in lavish shows and displays of fireworks, and on the other in an efflorescence of odes and ballads. Very like a poem

is Parisian Saint Aubin's captivating little drawing, which is really an allegory on the Marriage of Marie Antoinette. The composition of the delicate sketch with its involved allegorical symbols is analogous to a contemporary ode. It reveals the polish, the preciousness, and the thorough artificiality of the *beau monde* with all its affectations and its detachment from the unpleasant realities of life.

One sees in the sketch the allegorical figure of France courtesying with the grace of a lady of the court before a small circular altar. With a well-bred gesture she holds up a sceptre with her left hand as with her right she elegantly points towards heaven where two genii resting on convenient clouds present for universal admiration a medallion with the likeness of the lovely Dauphine. Below, two little loves support her shield of arms. The drawing is signed G. de St. Aubin and is dated 1770.

A strong contrast to the intimate sketch by Saint Aubin is afforded by the monumental design for a console and urn (Fig. 5) by the gifted sculptor, Augustin Pajou.⁷ Pajou's drawing, which is twice signed, is essentially a sculptor's drawing. On stylistic grounds it may be dated at about the same time as that of Saint Aubin's—that is roughly about 1765 to 1775. The drawing, a design for a decorative accessory intended for the garden or dwelling of a great noble, is of a type rare in Pajou's work, for though such commissions were frequently taken by other eighteenth-century sculptors, Pajou seldom turned his talents to this end. And though we know from documents that he decorated the Chateau de Brunoy and a few other palaces with similar objects, none of this sculpture exists.⁸ In fact, were it not for a few original designs for such projects we should know nothing more of this phase of Pajou's work. His handsome design thus possesses an antiquarian as well as an artistic importance.

The rococo style in which Pajou worked with such brilliance was no longer fashionable when, in 1816, Pierre Paul Prud'hon was commissioned to paint an Assumption of the Virgin as an altarpiece for the chapel of the Palace of the Tuileries. To this commission Prud'hon gave much study, making numerous sketches of the composition and details, as well as several small studies in oil on canvas. The present drawing (Fig. 6) is a preliminary idea for the project, a first thought

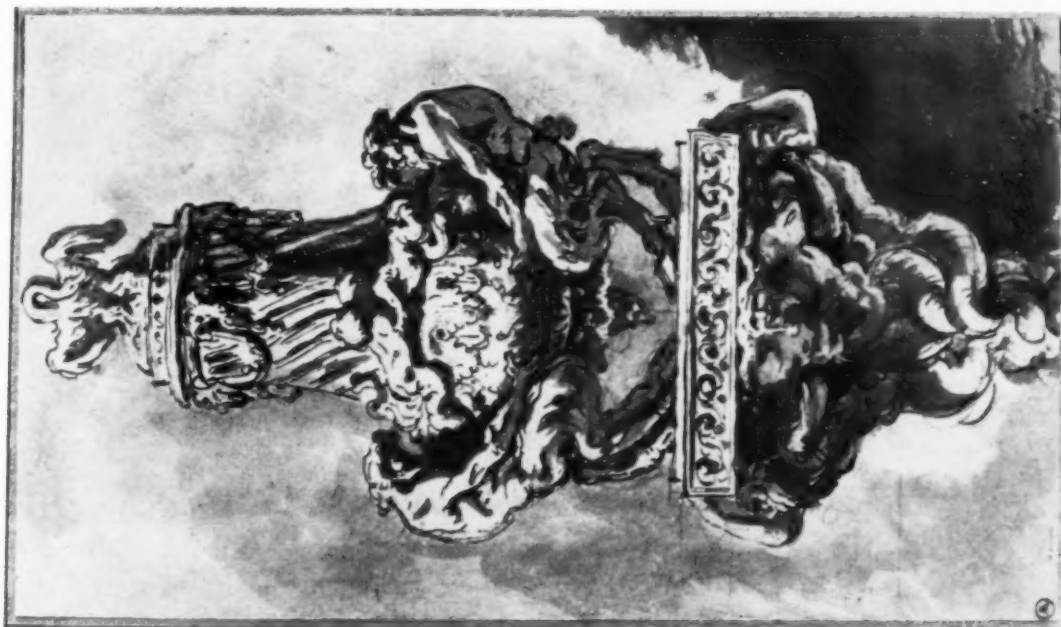


Fig. 5. Augustin Pajou: *Console and Vase*. Pen and sepia wash,
heightened with white.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art



Fig. 6. Pierre Paul Prud'hon: *The Assumption of the Virgin*.
Black Chalk, heightened with white on blue-gray paper.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art



*Fig. 4. Gabriel de Saint Aubin: Homage to Marie Antoinette. Black crayon washed with india ink and sepia; simulated mat washed with pale green.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art*

which he subsequently abandoned.⁹ His developed conception of the composition—of which the oil sketch in the Wallace Collection is a document—envisaged the Virgin supported by angels and encircled by a ring of cherubim. This carefully thought out composition was a very happy one but, unfortunately, it was adversely criticized by the Grande Aumônerie, who had commissioned the painting. Their criticism was directed against the circle of joyous little cherubs who it was felt more resembled pagan cupids than heavenly cherubim. The offending angels were removed from Prud'hon's subsequent studies and from the final canvas. The painting now in the Louvre, which Prud'hon exhibited in the salon of 1819, is the final stage in the long drawn out process of completing the commission.

The Biron collection as acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art is composed of 109 objects: four are paintings by Giambattista Tiepolo, the remainder drawings. Of these the greater part are Italian and largely the work of three Venetians: Francesco Guardi, represented by twenty luminous sketches, Giambattista Tiepolo, by whom there are fifty outstanding drawings, and fifteen by his son, Domenico. While most of these Venetian drawings were displayed last year in the exhibition, 'Tiepolo and His Contemporaries', the French drawings have not been on view, except for a brief period, and are, as a result, less well-known.

The drawings discussed above were selected for this article for several reasons. For one, apart from a comparatively uninteresting study of drapery by Ingres, a crayon portrait by J. A. M. Lemoine, and ten charming sketches by Constantin Guys, they comprise the only drawings of the French School included in the Biron purchase. But in a wider sense, the addition of these drawings to an American collection is a notable acquisition, for outstanding French drawings—especially ones by Watteau and Pajou—are rare, and only a very few have voyaged across the Atlantic.

¹ On the reverse there are slight sketches of figures.

² *L'Oeuvre de Daniel Marot . . .*, Armand Guérinet, éditeur, Paris (n. d.), I, pl. 77.

³ An example of this set is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

⁴ Ex coll.: Jules Niel, Paris; Marquis de Biron (Sale: Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, June 9-11, 1914, p. 67, no. 63.)

Josephine L. Allen, *The Bulletin of The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, XXXIII, 1938, pp. 77f.

⁵ Ex coll.: Catherine II of Russia, The Hermitage.

Harry B. Wehle, *op. cit.*, XXX, 1935, pp. 12-18.

⁶ Ex coll.: Marcel Thévenin, Paris.

Emile Dacier, *Gabriel de Saint Aubin . . .*, Paris, 1931, II, p. 17, no. 84. There is another drawing by St. Aubin of this subject which was in the collection of Baron Eugène de Rothschild. (Dacier, *op. cit.*, no. 83.)

⁷ Ex coll.: Eugène Tondou, Paris; Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, Paris. It also bears the stamp of the Alliance des Arts.

Exhibited at the *Exposition des dessins de maitres anciens à L'école des Beaux Arts*, Paris, 1879, no. 563.

Henri Stein, *Augustin Pajou*, Paris, 1912, pp. 228f., p. 418.

⁸ Stein, *loc. cit.*

⁹ Ex coll.: Charles de Boisfremont, Paris; Courtois, Paris; Paul Casimir Périer, Paris.

Jean Guiffrey, *L'Oeuvre de Pierre-Paul Prud'hon*, Paris, 1924, p. 115, no. 318.

ROGIER VAN DER WEYDEN'S CAMBRAI ALTAR

By E. P. RICHARDSON

THE publication of Destrée's important survey of Rogier van der Weyden has again emphasized the mystery of the Cambrai altar, the most fully documented and (if it can be found) the only work of the artist which can be exactly dated. It is a curious freak of history that we should know almost everything about this great undertaking of Rogier's last period except its subject matter and whether it still exists. We know not only that it was ordered by the abbé of Saint-Aubert de Cambrai, a prelate of the court of Philip the Good, on the 16th of June, 1455, of "maistre Rogier de la Pasture, maistre ouvrier de peinture de Bruxelles," but also many small details of its history. We know how much the carter Gillot de Congnelieu de Roquier charged to bring the altar by three horse wagon from Brussels to Cambrai during the first week of June, 1459; that Rogier and his wife and a young painter named Hayne (Hans Memling?) made the installation of the altar the occasion for a little jaunt to Cambrai and that two craftsmen and a street cleaner, also pressed into service to help set the picture in place, afterwards had a bottle of wine at the expense of the abbé in return for their labor and advice.

The documents from the memoirs of the abbé of Saint-Aubert, in the archives of Lille, were originally published by de Laborde¹ but were given again in full by Destrée with an important notation:²

—1459.—Pour un tableau de peinture fait à Bruxelles assis en l'église chéans: —Le XVI de juing, l'an LV, je Jehan, abbé, marchanday à maistre Rogier de le Pasture, maistre ouvrier de peinture de Bruxelles, de faire I tableau de V pieds en quaire, à II huystoires, de telle devise que l'ouvrage le monstre. Et furent les devises faictes à plusieurs fois, et ossi il fist ledit tabliau de VI piez et demi de hault et de V piez de large pour le bien de loevre; lequel tabliau fu parfait a le Trinité, l'an LIX, se cousta en principal llll^{xx} riders d'or de XLII s. llll d. le pièce, monnoie de Cambray, dont il fu tous paiez du nostre à plusieurs foiz. Se fu donné à sa femme et à ses ouviers, quant on l'admena, Il escus d'or de llll. I. xx d. tournois. Se fu admenez chéans par le kar Gillot de Gongnelieu du Roquier, le premier septemaine de juing, l'an LIX, se cousta

en voiture à lll cheval, à fardeler a Bruxelles, en winages, cauchies (*droit de chaussée*), en despens dudit carton (*charretier*) et de Jennin de Montegui, clerc de cheens, que y furent IX l. XV s. x. d. t., et ll mencauts d'avaine de XXII g. et fu chéns admenez le VIII^e de juing LIX, et tout payé du nôtre.

—Item donné à Pierart Remon, questier, Jehan Fermin, entailler, et Martin le voirier, pour avoir assis ledit tauvelet en cuer sur hestaux les XIX et XX^e juing, pour avoir ses veues, et pour şcavoir où on le poroit assir plus plaisamment, llll patars pour aller desjunier.

—Item payé, audit P. Remon, le VI d'aout LIX, pour une reprise et une liste de bos (*pièce de bois*) mis et assiz desoubz et deseure ledit tableau, l lyon d'or de L. s. t.

—Item marchandé à Jehan Cachet, fondeur, de faire et assir l candellet de geure (*cuivre*), à v candelers, devant le dit tabliau, par le manière qu'il est à veyr; s'en heult par maquiet (*marché*) fait en tasque (*à la tasche*) x escus de xxl., païiez par le cambre des comptes sur mon compte le XVIII d'aoust LIX.

—Item fut donné à ses lll varlez, quant ils l'eurent assis aplomb sur (?) le pervigile Nostre Dame my aoust, LIX pour leur vin, llll patars de . . . vl s. vlill d.

—Item fu depuis payet à Hayne, jone pointre pour poindre autour dudit tableau le liste (*cadre*) et le deseure et jusques as cayères (*caiers*) de cuer, LX s. du nostre.

—1459.—For a painting made at Brussels situated in the church at home.

—The 16th day of June, the year 1455, I Jean, abbé, dealt with master Rogier de la Pasture, master painter of Brussels, to make one painting five feet square, of two scenes, of such subject as the work shows. And the subjects were made at various times, and also he made the said painting six feet and a half high and five feet wide for the good of the work; which painting completed at the Trinity, the year 1459, cost in principal 80 riders of gold of 43 s. 4 d. the piece, money of Cambrai, of which all was paid him by us at various times. There was given to his wife and workmen, when they brought it, 11 escus of gold of 4 livres 20 pence tournois. It was brought to us by the carter Gillet de Gongnelieu du Roquier, the first week of June, 1459; it cost to bring from Brussels in three horse wagon, in wine-dues, in tolls, in the expenses of the said carter and of Jennin de Montegui, our clerk, 9 livres, 15 shillings, 10 pence tournois and 11 measures of oats of 22 g. and was brought to us (the monastery) the 8th of June, 1459, and all paid from our account.

—Item given to Pierart Remon, carpenter, Jehan Fermin, ciseleur, and Martin the street cleaner, for having set the said picture in clamps of copper the



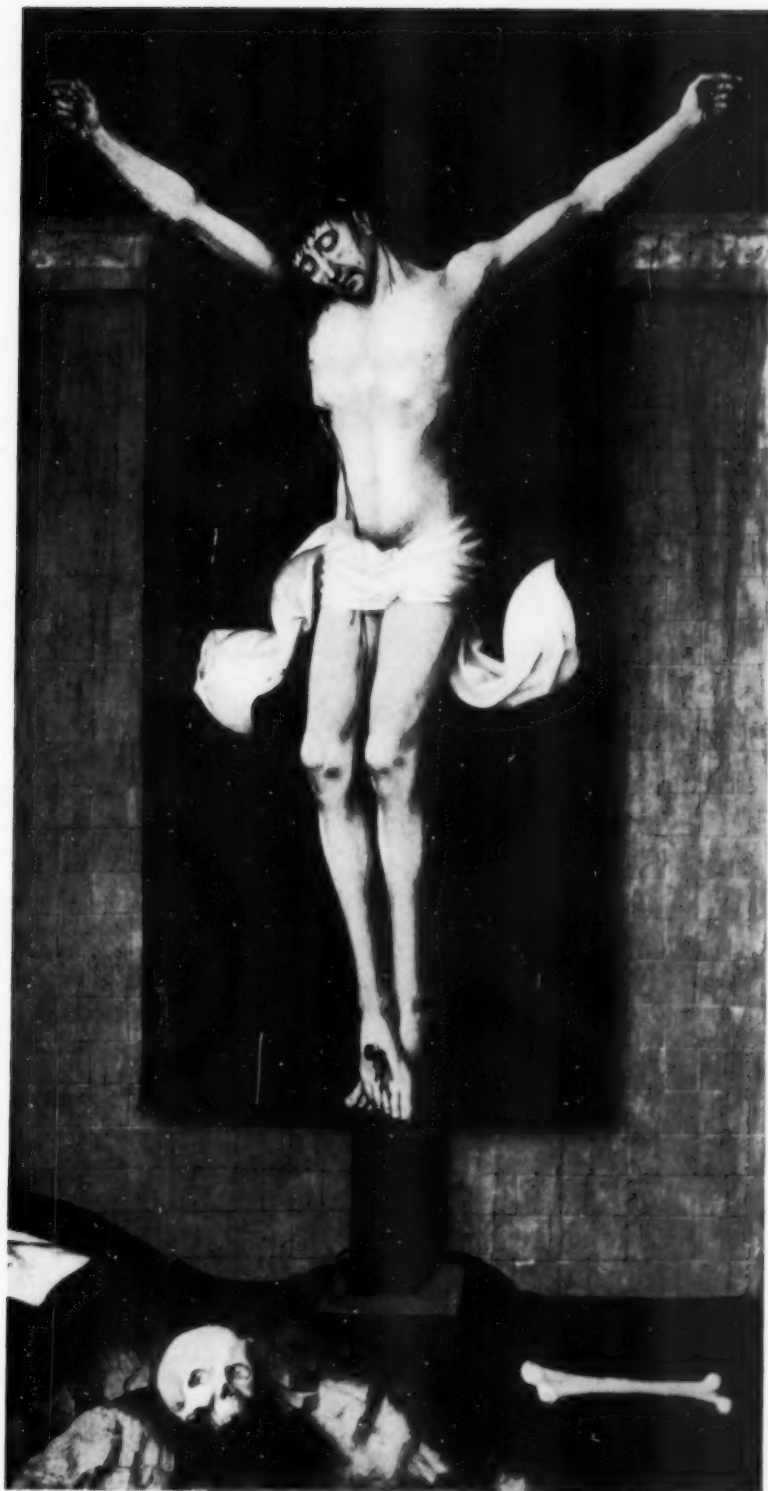
*Fig. 1. Hugo van der Goe: Portinari Altarpiece
Florence, Uffizi Palace*



*Fig. 2. Rogier van der Weyden: Triptych
Munich, Alte Pinakothek*



*Fig. 3. Rogier van der Weyden: Virgin and St. John
Philadelphia, Johnson Coll.*



*Fig. 4. Rogier van der Weyden: Crucifixion
Philadelphia, Johnson Coll.*



*Fig. 5. Rogier van der Weyden: Portrait of Meliaduse d'Este
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art*

19th and 20th of June, to have his (their?) views and to know where one might set it more pleasingly, 4 patars to go have refreshments.

—Item paid to the said P. Remon, the 6th of August, 1459, for a repair and for a piece of wood placed below and above the said picture, 1 lion d'or of 50 s. t.

—Item, ordered of Jean Cachet, founder, to make and place one candelabrum of copper, of 5 candles, before the said picture, so that it could be seen; he went to market for the tasch (piece of metal or stone), 10 escus of 20 livres, paid by the treasury of my account, the 18th of August, 59.

—Item, was given to his 3 workmen, when they had fixed it upright on (the altar) on the eve of Our Lady in August, 59, for their wine, 4 patars of 6 s. 8 d.

—Item, was since paid to Hayne, young painter, to paint around the said picture the frame and the above part up to the copper lamps 60 s. from our own account.³

The first investigators, unfortunately, mistook the Roman numerals for Arabic and read the specifications as "a picture five feet square in eleven scenes." The altar was identified by Waagen as a large triptych in the Prado (No. 1881-92), whose central panel measures 195 by 172 cm. (about 6' 5" by 5' 8").⁴ The Prado picture is quite definitely a triptych; but its central portion corresponds in some degree with the measurements in the documents and there are, if not 11 scenes, at least a good number. (To be exact, 14.) This was never considered a very satisfactory identification and in 1926 Hulin de Loo advanced the theory that the Prado altar was not the Cambrai altar and not by Rogier. He attributed it to Vrancke van der Stockt, the man who succeeded Rogier as city-painter of Brussels, an opinion in which Friedländer has concurred.⁵

The Johnson *Crucifixion* has been studied by many excellent scholars.⁶ But so long as the Cambrai altar was supposed to have eleven scenes, there was no reason to connect it with the Johnson diptych, which was also usually dated on grounds of style at about 1445.

As Destrée points out, however, the document clearly specifies a picture in two scenes. And the best scholars no longer feel so sure of Rogier's chronology as they once felt. Friedländer recently referred to it as being an open question; while Destrée makes no attempt to ar-

range his works chronologically. It seems worth while, therefore, to examine the possibility that the Johnson *Crucifixion* may be the Cambrai altar, even if this hypothesis violates the usual opinion of Rogier's style in the late '50's.

The Johnson *Crucifixion* (Figs. 3 and 4) is a very large and important work, in two scenes, nearly square in size, and corresponding roughly to the dimensions of the Cambrai altar. (The height of each panel is 71 inches; the combined width 72 1/2 inches; or 5 feet 10 inches by 6 feet; 180 by 184 cm.) Both its great size and superb quality make it clearly one of the major efforts of Rogier's career. Quite contrary to descriptions of it by European scholars as almost a monochrome painting, it is of a special brilliance of color; for the colors are not only rich in themselves but of an almost High Renaissance largeness and power. The white of the Madonna's robes and the rose of St. John's garments are huge, unbroken color areas against the scarlet cloth, brown wall, brown and green earth and dark sky. The other panel is equally monumental, although the flesh tones of the crucified figure and the brown cross are slightly less spectacular than the magnificent white-red-brown contrasts of the left panel.

The color is, however, only one of the striking peculiarities of these panels. This is the only diptych of such a size in Rogier's work and is, furthermore, of a strangely asymmetrical composition for an artist whose taste was so definitely for the *closed* form. A diptych of this size is to a considerable degree a contradiction of Rogier's normal style, so that one would in any case look for a special reason, such as an unusual site or a special stipulation by the purchaser, to explain its existence.

I find it impossible to accept the usual explanation that these two panels were the wings of an organ or of a triptych. If one compares these two panels with, for example, the wings of Rogier's *Adoration of the Magi* (Munich) (Fig. 2) or Hugo van der Goes' wings of the *Portinari Altar* (Fig. 1) as examples of the design of the triptych, or with van der Goes' wings of an altar, or organ, in Holyrood Palace, Edinburgh, it becomes evident that the Johnson panels represent a different principle of composition. The triptych wings, which were intended to be seen at a considerable distance one from another, are

designed with this fact in mind. Their subjects are related to each other through the central panel; in design they balance each other in general but are related to each other only through the central portion. They certainly do not speak to each other directly across the central portion, as if that were something to be ignored. The Johnson panels, however, both in subject and design, are intimately and directly related to each other. The lines of the wall and the sloping ground flow continuously from one panel to the other. Most conclusively, the tip of the Madonna's robe is continued across the central division into the right panel. The two parts *must*, therefore, be seen together.

There remains one other possibility. Were they perhaps the exterior surfaces of an organ or altar cover? The superb quality and rich color speak against this, as does the fact that the external wings of Rogier's *Last Judgment* at Beaune and his *Bladelin Altar* in Berlin, as well as of van der Goes' *Portinari Altar*, not to mention Holbien's indubitable organ panels at Bâle, are all in monochrome. If one cannot settle the argument beyond all question, at least the weight of the evidence seems to me to show that the Johnson panels are not wings of any kind but form, and always were intended to form, a single painting in two parts, such as the document describes.

The style is furthermore of an extraordinary monumental severity. Friedländer speaks of the "treatment in the manner of a sculptor," which aptly expresses the force and tension of the drawing. The figures are nearly life size, drawn with great power of silhouette, and set against a formal background. The color is, as has already been remarked, almost that of the High Renaissance. The stiff energy of the outline, the crispness of the drapery and the modeling of flesh, have caused these panels to be dated in the middle '40's on the grounds of style. However, the style agrees very well with the *Portrait of Meliaduse d'Este* (Fig. 5) in the Metropolitan Museum, which was done either during or after Rogier's visit to Italy,⁷ and which certainly shows none of the atmospheric softening associated with Rogier's post-Italian style. Both works show the same quality of bold silhouette, the same contrasts of broad, simple color areas, the same acute precision of line and severely sculptural modeling. Is it inconceivable to associate

the Johnson *Crucifixion*, the extreme point of monumental severity in Rogier's work, with the period after the visit to Italy, while the memory of Italian frescoes was strongest in his mind, rather than with the period immediately before 1450? I do not believe so.

There is one discrepancy between the documents and the Johnson diptych which cannot be explained. The Johnson panels put together form a square, and, as I am informed by Mr. Henri Marceau, Curator of the Johnson Collection, show no traces of having been cut down. The Cambrai altar was originally to be square but was later made "six and a half feet high and five feet wide for the good of the work." Was perhaps an elaborate frame added by the artist? Or was there a predella? This is a weak point in the resemblance. But it is, I believe, the only weak point, while many strong points of resemblance between the documents and the Johnson *Crucifixion*—the great square altar, in two scenes, of unusual format as well as unusual monumentality—seem to weigh in favor of the possibility that this is the Cambrai altar.

¹ De Laborde, *Les Ducs de Bourgogne*, Paris, (1849) Vol. I.

² Jules Destrée, *Rogier de la Pasture, van der Weyden*, Brussels, 1930, Vol. I, p. 140.

³ My thanks are due to Mr. René Muller for courteous assistance in translating some of the technical terms in this document.

⁴ See Friedländer, *Altniederlandische Malerei*, II, p. 18 and 106.

⁵ Hulin de Loo, *Biographie Nationale*, 1926; *Catalog of Brussels Exhibition*, 1935, p. 15; Friedländer, *Altniederlandische Malerei*, XIV, p. 86.

⁶ Notably: Valentiner, *Catalogue of the Johnson Collection, Flemish and Dutch Paintings*, 1913, No. 334-335; F. Winckler, *Der Meister von Flemalle und Rogier van der Weyden*, 1913, p. 51; Friedländer, *Art in America*, IX (1921), p. 65; Id., *Altniederlandische Malerei*, *op. cit.*; Sir Martin Conway, *The Van Eycks and their followers*, 1921, p. 135; Fierens-Gevaert, *Histoire de la peinture flamande*, I, p. 47; Malcolm Vaughn, *International Studio*, XC (1928), p. 43; Roger Fry, *Flemish Art*, 1927; Destrée, *op. cit.*

⁷ The Catalog of the *Esposizione della Pittura Ferrarese del Rinascimento Ferrara*, (1933) p. 19, says, "certainly painted in 1450, the year of Jubilee, in commemoration of which Meliaduse is represented with the hammer of the Porta Santa in his hand." Friedländer, *Art in America*, IX (1921), p. 65, suggests, however, that the portrait may have been done after 1450 in Flanders from a drawing made in Italy.

A RELIEF FROM TELL EL-AMARNA

By JOHN COONEY

FROM the point of view of the modern excavator, Tell el-Amarna is perhaps the ideal of all the ancient sites in Egypt. The precision of its arbitrary founding, the brevity of its occupation, together with the total absence of later settlements on the site have offered an opportunity for a detailed study and exact dating of the artifacts of a decade or two perhaps without parallel in Egypt. Added to which there has always been the fascination of a romantic personality and a lost cause. Objects with an Amarna provenience are always greatly prized.

The Albright Art Gallery in Buffalo recently announced the acquisition, by purchase, of a limestone relief of Akhenaten which on stylistic grounds was presumed to be from this site (Fig. 1). On examination, the relief has recently been discovered to be part of Stele N, and is thus a document intimately connected with the ancient and modern history of this site. Our fragment (extreme measurements $30\frac{3}{4}$ " long by $23\frac{1}{4}$ " high) pictures the king wearing the khepersu helmet, which is sometimes, though without certain authority, referred to as the war helmet. The king stands in the conventional posture of a man worshipping the Aten or sun disk, a scene repeated at Amarna to a degree that suggests a certain lack of imagination. But such scenes doubtless served as propaganda for the new religion, and it was necessary to stress this standard symbolism of the new theology, probably all too superficially grasped by the majority of Amarna's inhabitants.

Stylistically this head may be taken as typical of the earlier work at Amarna. Tending towards the grotesque, as do almost all of the earlier architectural sculptures at this site, it is yet saved from complete grotesqueness by its delicacy and a certain softness which give the figure, in spite of its exaggerated realism, an ideal cast. This is particularly noticeable if we compare it with the monumental portraits in the round erected at Karnak by Akhenaten in the years preceding the

founding of Amarna. In these, which are clearly in the same tradition as the Buffalo fragment, it is difficult to see anything other than a perversion of taste, though it must be admitted that the Karnak statues are complete and our head has been severed from its rather unpleasing body, thus giving it for us the romantic appeal of a fragment. Indeed one wonders if many pieces of Egyptian art do not have greatly increased aesthetic appeal for the modern world because of their removal from an elaborate composition. To judge Egyptian art by this approach is of course quite false, and amounts to appraisal of ancient works by twentieth century standards. Clearly in our piece the dreamy quality of the face has been greatly enhanced by its isolation. Simplicity of setting and subordination of minor elements to the major were rarely present in Empire relief work, much as we may admire them in Greek art of the great age.

To review the recorded history of all these stelae of Amarna would bring one in contact with almost all the great names and expeditions connected with the early development of Egyptology as a science. Only the epoch-making expedition of Napoleon would be missing. Prisse D'Avennes, Harris, Gliddon, l'Hôte, Robert Hay and Lepsius each studied and recorded in part some of these monuments. Hay in particular made some charming sketches of the stelae which are now with his papers, still for the greater part unpublished, in the British Museum.

The modern history of Stele N (Fig. 2) is a distinguished one. During his brief but highly productive stay at Amarna, Lepsius recorded as much of this monument as was then visible, apparently about the same area being then exposed as at the time of Petrie's work in 1890. Lepsius was so impressed by the royal portraits on this monument that he selected them as the typical portraits of the king and queen illustrating them separately in his *Denkmaler III*, 295 (45-48). Petrie next published it in 1894 in his *Tell el-Amarna* with a brief description, stating that nineteen lines of text were then visible although the statues at the sides were still completely buried. In 1898 the entire stela was cleared by Steindorff¹ revealing in all twenty-six lines of text and the sculpture groups on each side, the existence of which had been surmised by Petrie.



*Fig. 1. Tell el-Amarna; Head of Akhenaten from Stèle N
Buffalo, Albright Art Gallery*

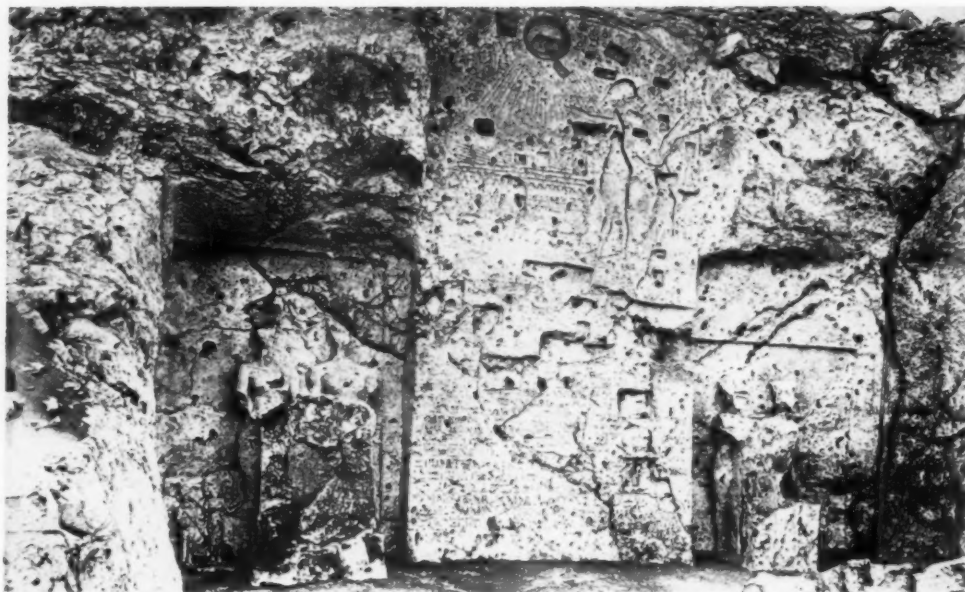


Fig. 2. Tell el-Amarna: Stele N. Reproduced from N. de G. Davies,
"The Rock Tombs of Amarna"

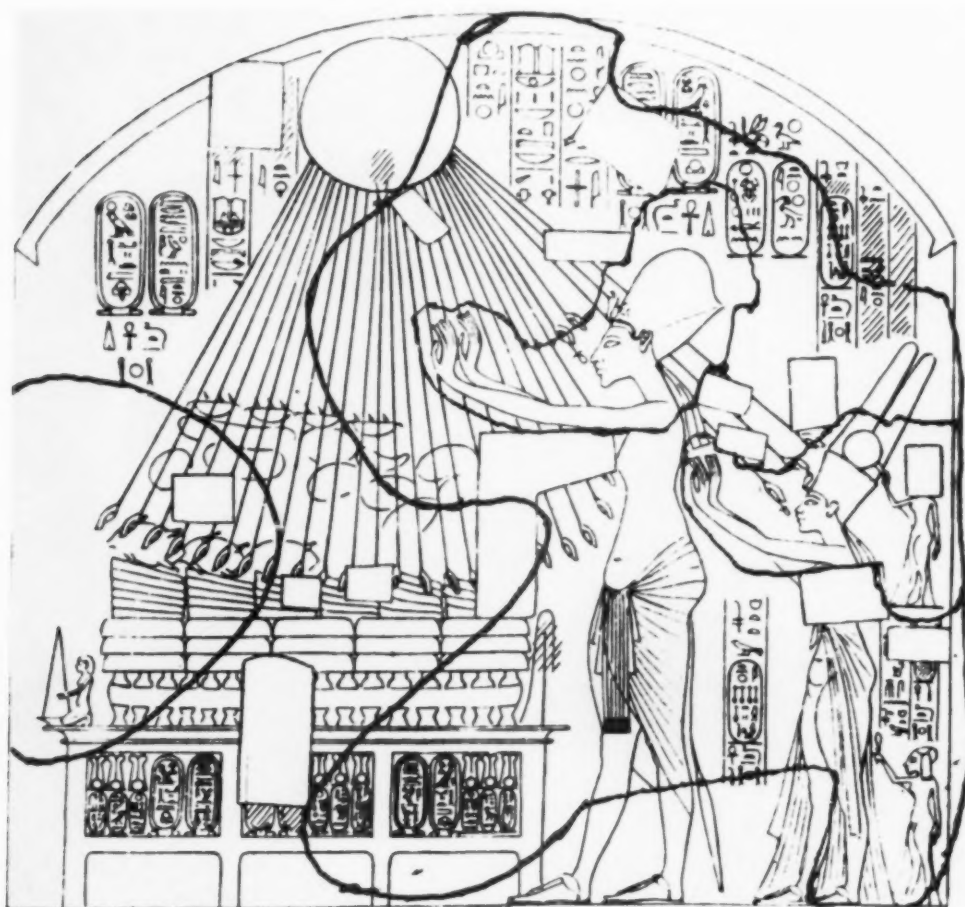


Fig. 3. Tell el-Amarna: Stele N. Line Drawing showing mutilated areas

The most comprehensive publication of this as well as the other stelae at Amarna, is to be found in the great work of N. de G. Davies, a publication of which it is impossible to overestimate the importance.² With this definitive publication it seemed as if the recording of the monument were complete. But the same fate that has overtaken so many monuments in the Far East (due also to the same reasons) befell Stele N, and in the absence of the local guardians the monument was hacked to pieces some years ago to obtain fragments for sale (Figs. 4 & 5). The only areas salvaged were the Buffalo fragment and the smaller relief of the queen. The accompanying line drawing (Fig. 3), reproduced from Davies, shows within the outlined sections the area thus destroyed, the stele being now almost obliterated. The same destruction was visited on Stele S but whether any fragments were salvaged, and, if so where they are now, is unknown.

Before purchasing the relief, the Museum made every effort to ascertain its source, requesting this information from the dealer several times, but was answered only with bland assurances that nothing was known about the origin. While so important and famous a piece once placed in a museum could not long remain unidentified, it is at least some consolation to be able to record its final disposition and to know that it has not entered the oblivion of an unknown private collection.

From this episode at least two suggestions can be drawn. One is that museums refrain from purchasing fragments of relief sculpture the immediate, and preferably the ultimate, source of which is undisclosed. This course of action is obviously exposed to trickery, but in view of the comparatively restricted channels through which ancient objects pass a check-up should not be too difficult. There has been, and still is, so much rivalry between museums for the possession of outstanding ancient objects that it is probably almost useless to suggest a concerted refusal of museums to purchase such pieces until they have received definite word of their source. Such action would at least be in accord with the spirit of the Congress of Archaeologists which met at Cairo in May, 1937 and condemned the trade in antiquities as prejudicial to the scientific study of them. The second and much the more important suggestion is to stress the necessity of publishing in as complete a form as possible all the important

ancient monuments. Petrie urged this course many years ago in his *Methods and Aims in Archaeology* as did also Prisse D'Avennes as far back as 1845 in his *Salle des Ancêtres*. Such work has for some time been the primary purpose of both the Oriental Institute of Chicago and the Egypt Exploration Society of London, to which organizations Egyptologists owe a great debt. Many of the monuments published in the great pioneering works of the nineteenth century have since perished, and it is only reasonable to conclude, especially in view of the extensive excavations of the past two generations, that more will perish during this century, human nature being what it is.

Today with the great interest shown in ancient remains there can be no justification for the unauthorized removal of antiquities from their original sites. In the first half of the nineteenth century this practice may have been defensible though even then it had its opponents. Champollion in his *Lettres Ecrites d'Egypte* gives an elaborate list of the ruins disappearing between 1800 and 1829, and Lepsius refers many times in his letters to the spoliation of Egyptian monuments. The European Consuls resident in Egypt during the first three or four decades of the nineteenth century must bear a heavy share of the responsibility for the destruction of much archaeological evidence in their attempts, for the most part successful, to assemble collections. Dr. John Bowring in his *Report on Egypt* presented to the English Parliament in 1838, attributes much of the destruction going on to Europeans searching for antiquities. In 1841 appeared a slender volume written in the rather flowery language of the period, *An Appeal to the Antiquaries of Europe on the Destruction of the Monuments of Egypt* by George R. Gliddon. Although an Englishman, Gliddon's name is primarily connected with the early development of Egyptology in America³ and with his services as American Consul in Cairo. His wrath was directed primarily against the wanton destruction of the ancient ruins by the picturesque Mohammed Ali, but he also lashed out against foreign despoilers. One of his stories, perhaps a classic of artistic dilettanteism, concerns an English traveler of the late 1830's who was eager to sketch some of the reliefs in the Tomb of Amenophis III in the Valley of the Kings at Thebes. Finding the light poor, he had three royal portraits cut from the sculptured walls

and removed to his boat for more leisurely copying. When his sketches were completed he threw the sculptures in the Nile.

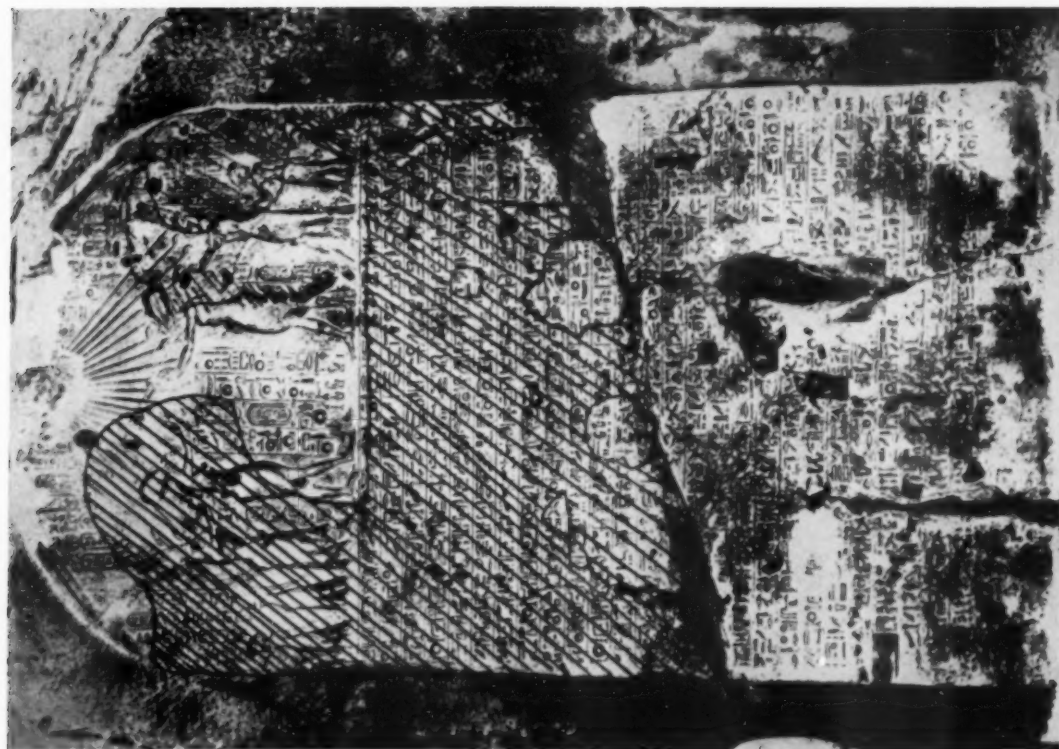
With the great advance in Egyptology as a scientific study it is pathetic to reflect that these depredations of the nineteenth century are being repeated today. At the end of every summer there are always reports of the spoliation of tomb reliefs and unprotected monuments frequently located in remote areas. Even the royal tomb at Amarna is reported to have been robbed of some of its stucco reliefs. The only hope of permanently stopping this destruction is for museums to unite in closing the market.

Today, after having stood more or less intact from the fourteenth century B. C. down to the twentieth century of our era, the trail of Stele N stretches from the limestone fragments still lying in the sand at the site of the Stele, (or so they were a short time ago) to Germany, where in the museums at Berlin and Leipsig are respectively the heads of the king and queen from the west group (excavated in 1898), to the portion now in Buffalo, and the unknown destination of the portrait of the queen. A close study of older collections in our museums would very likely reveal the presence of fragments of some of the other stelae brought back in the nineteenth century.

¹ See Steindorff, *Durch die Libysche Wüste zur Amonsoase* pp. 11-12.

² N. de G. Davies, *The Rock Tombs of Amarna*, 6 vols., London, 1908.

³ For a very interesting account of the development of Egyptology in America, including Gliddon's contribution, see the article by C. R. Williams, *The New York Historical Quarterly Bulletin*, Vol. IV No. 1, April, 1920.



Figs. 4 and 5. Tell el-Amarna: Stele N, showing recent mutilations



*John Hesselius: Charles Calvert and Colored Slave
Baltimore, General Lawrason Riggs Collection*

JOHN HESSELIUS

An Account of his Life and the First Catalogue of His Portraits

By THEODORE BOLTON AND GEORGE C. GROCE, JR.

EDITOR'S NOTE. *The rise of the American portrait painting tradition in the middle Atlantic colonies during the eighteenth century is still one of the most obscure sections of American art history. Although numerous portraits painted in Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia are found in public and private collections, the lives of the painters and the records of their work have been so little studied that we are not yet in the position to know the facts, much less to form opinions on the nature of what happened. The curator of the Pennsylvania Museum of Art has made an admirable beginning in the past year by holding exhibitions of paintings by Benjamin West and Gustavus Hesselius. The following essay, by making available the existing information upon John Hesselius, will, it is hoped, furnish further aid for the study of what must be for Americans a subject of great interest, that is, the origin and growth of a tradition of fine art upon our soil.*

THE tradition of American painting in the Middle Atlantic Colonies, where John Hesselius worked from 1750 to 1778, developed somewhat later than in New England. The productions of his father Gustavus Hesselius (1682-1755) in Philadelphia were contemporaneous with those of John Smibert (1698-1751) in Boston, and although neither artist was an American, both contributed to the rise of a distinctive American tradition. However, Smibert's work was meritorious and voluminous enough to create a taste for portraits and to impress a generation of artists, whereas the work of the elder Hesselius produced no perceptible influence. Indeed, to judge from the signed portraits of John Hesselius, the father produced little impression even upon his son.

The influence of the father on the son, whatever it was, is insignificant in comparison with the predominating influence of an English artist who painted portraits in Philadelphia during the early manhood of John Hesselius. But before we speak of this influence, the facts relating to the artist's life, to his work, and to his contemporaries must be presented.

John Hesselius was born in 1728. His birthplace is still undetermined. He was the second child of Gustavus Hesselius, the Swedish painter who came to Christina, now Wilmington, Delaware, in 1711, and who left shortly after for Philadelphia.¹

To determine the possible birthplace and early whereabouts of John Hesselius it is necessary to trace the record of his father's life. Little is known of Gustavus Hesselius' marriage except that his wife's maiden name was Lydia, and that their first born child, Andreas, was baptised at Wilmington in 1716. Some time thereafter the couple went to Maryland. Church records, dated 1720, 1721, 1722 and 1725 all relate to a commission given to Gustavus Hesselius to paint an altarpiece for the parish church of Saint Barnabas, Prince George's County, Maryland. He is next recorded as having settled in Philadelphia, in 1735, where he bought a house on the north side of High Street below Fourth Street. However, it cannot be proved that he continued to live in Prince George's County from 1725 to 1735, and that his son, John Hesselius, was born in Maryland. Furthermore, Gustavus Hesselius was a man of unsettled religious convictions, turning from the Swedish Lutheran Church to the Church of England, then to the faith of the Moravian Brethren, and again to the faith of his fathers some time before his interment in Old Swede's Church, Philadelphia,¹ so that the records of three religious denominations must be searched for the possible notation of the birthplace and birth date of John Hesselius. Such a search has not been made.

That John Hesselius was reared in an environment suitable for the training of a practical painter is shown by the character of his father's occupations. Gustavus Hesselius and John Winter of London advertised in *The Pennsylvania Packet*, December 11, 1740, as painters of coats of arms for coaches, of landscapes, of signs, of "shew-boards," and also as house painters, ship painters, and restorers of old pictures.^{2,3} Nor does this exhaust the list of occupations. A record of payment to Gustavus Hesselius dated 1746, shows that the father constructed an organ for the Moravian Brethren at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, for £25, a comparatively large sum for those times. In this undertaking the father employed John G. Klemm and his

assistant, David Tannenberg, both men born in Saxony and the former trained as an organ maker.⁴

Thus the practical painter was also a man of enterprise and it may be assumed that John Hesselius was reared in comfortable circumstances. This conclusion is strengthened by a record showing that John Hesselius at the age of twenty could afford to spend £3 on October 5, 1749, to attend the fashionable Philadelphia Dancing Assembly.⁵

It is not known at what time the artist painted his first portraits. Mrs. James Gordon, painted in 1750, is his earliest dated portrait. In 1751 he painted portraits of the following persons: Mrs. Gustavus Brown of Maryland; John Wallace of Philadelphia; Mrs. John Wallace; Joshua Maddox of Philadelphia; Mrs. Joshua Maddox; John Fitzhugh and Mrs. John Fitzhugh. Since some of the foregoing sitters were possibly from Virginia, it may yet be shown that the artist worked in that state during this period. He is next heard of in Philadelphia.

Gustavus Hesselius died at Philadelphia on May 25, 1755, and in his will he mentions his surviving children as: Elizabeth (born 1724); Sarah; Lydia, whose daughter also named Lydia married the Swedish artist, Adolph Ulric Wertmüller; and John.³ By the terms of this will, proved May 29, 1755, and for which John Hesselius was designated as executor, the father bequeathed to his son the house as well as his "Chamber Organ, Books, Paints, Oyls, Colours and all my other painting materials and Tools, and my unfinished pictures."⁶ The deed for the purchase of the house, dated December 27, 1735, and the deed for its transference to the son, are both in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds, Philadelphia.⁷

An important letter by John Hesselius, written during this time, gives direct evidence that the artist painted in three states. He wrote:

JUNE 26, 1755. TO MR. CALLISTER.

Dear Sir:

I have been so hurried in my affairs since I came here—and now since the death of my dear Father, that I hope you will excuse my seeming neglect in not writing before. My being left executor of my Father's estate has

obliged me to remain and to stay much longer in Philadelphia than I desired, but I hope in a fortnight more I shall be moving down to Virginia, and as soon as I can dispatch the business that I have on hand there I intend to come to Maryland, where I have already left my heart.⁸

This important reference is followed by a record, relating in point of time to the July after the death of his father, that is of no consequence except to establish another date. There is a vague mention of the artist in a letter by Benjamin Franklin to Samuel Hazard, dated April 11, 1757.

The Case seems to be different with respect to the Prizes which you now speak of as out of date: In July 1755 when you promised to Account with me for them if I would furnish Mr. Hesselus (sic) with Academy Tickets, they were as much out of Date as they are now.

Fortunately two other Franklin letters are more specific. In a long letter, dated December 3, 1757, Benjamin Franklin wrote from London to Mrs. Deborah Franklin at Philadelphia:

I hear there has a miniature painter gone over to Philadelphia, a relation to John Reynolds. If Sally's picture is not done to your mind by the young man, and the other gentleman is a good hand and follows the business, suppose you get Sally's done by him, and send it to me with your small picture, that I may here get all our little family drawn in one conversation piece.

The second letter reveals the fact that the "young man" was none other than John Hesselius. In this letter, dated June 10, 1758, Franklin wrote to Deborah:

I shall send some (writing materials) to Sally by the next opportunity . . . I fancy I see more Likeness in her Picture than I did at first, and I look at it often with Pleasure, as at least it reminds me of her. Yours is at the Painter's, who is to copy it, and do me one of the same Size; but as to Family Pieces, it is said they never look well, and are quite out of Fashion; and I find the Limner very unwilling to undertake anything of the kind. However, when Franky's comes, and that of Sally by young Hesselius, I shall see what can be done.⁹

The portrait of Sarah Franklin (1744-1808), later Mrs. Richard Bache, was thus painted but it remains unidentified. It is also not known whether the family group portrait was painted. There are no further references to the matter in the Franklin letters.

May one infer from these references that John Hesselius was a miniature painter? Certainly Franklin suggests that a "miniature"

painter should paint the portrait as an alternative to that by John Hesselius in case the latter's picture "is not done to your mind." He also notes that the portrait is to be sent with Deborah's "small picture" to London. Finally the specific mention by A. H. Wharton of a miniature painted by Hesselius, although not located, strengthens the inference.¹⁰

For the following year there are two references. The portraits of Reverend Abraham Keteltas and his wife are both signed and dated 1758.

Thereafter John Hesselius began painting more extensively in Maryland, where he finally settled. From 1759 to 1762 a chronology may be established from inscriptions on his portraits. In 1759 he painted the portrait of John Bolton of Chestertown; in 1760 he painted the portrait of Thomas Marsh of Queen Anne County; in 1761 he painted four portraits of the Calvert children; and in 1762 he painted portraits of Samuel Lloyd Chew of Anne Arundel County, his wife, and Mrs. Smith whose maiden name was Chew.

In Maryland, where as early as 1755 he had written "I have already left my heart," on January 30, 1763, John Hesselius married Mary Young of "Primrose Hill" near Annapolis, the only child of Colonel Richard Young and the widow of Henry Woodward. To this couple there were born Henrietta Maria (1764-1765), Gustavus (1765-1767), Henrietta (born 1768); Charlotte (1770-1794); Caroline (1773-1817); Elizabeth Dulaney (1775-1808), and John (1777-1804).¹¹

Having married and settled in Maryland John Hesselius soon established himself as a solid citizen and a country gentleman. Church records reveal him as a church warden and then vestryman of Saint Ann's parish church from April 4, 1763, that is from less than three months after his marriage until April 20, 1767;¹² while a letter written by the Reverend Bennett Allen to Governor Horatio Sharpe, dated March 30, 1768, indicates that the artist was a man of wealth and on intimate terms with the governor.¹³

To return to the church references: a mystery is presented in the records of Saint Ann's parish church. From these records it is evident that two men named John Hesselius lived at Annapolis. A cer-

tain John Hesselius, vestryman, "abjured the pretender" to the throne on May 7, 1728, which was the same year that John Hesselius was born. Nor is this the only reference to the earlier John Hesselius, for in the same records he is noted as having denounced transubstantiation on April 5, 1743.¹²

Who was this earlier John Hesselius? Was he one of the four uncles of John Hesselius the artist? It is known that Gustavus Hesselius was one of four brothers.² Andreas Hesselius accompanied his brother Gustavus to Delaware in 1711 and was a minister of the Swedish faith there until he was succeeded by his brother Samuel in 1719. But we do not know the name of the fourth brother.

If the earlier John Hesselius was a relative of John Hesselius, the painter, did his presence in Annapolis induce the younger man to visit the city and finally settle there? Perhaps a search of the land records in Annapolis might throw a light upon the mystery. Perhaps, also, such a search might reveal something of the status of John Hesselius as a man of property.

During this time, probably in 1764, Charles Willson Peale, a clock maker and saddler who wished to become a painter, sought the instruction of John Hesselius. The story is told both by his son Rembrandt Peale and by Anne H. Wharton. Writing in 1855 Rembrandt Peale states:

Hesselius having married a lady of some fortune residing near Annapolis my father's impulse was to visit him, and by engaging him to paint his wife's portrait, acquire some knowledge of the proper process of painting; but Mr. Hesselius, on learning of the circumstances of his young applicant, generously allowed him to see him paint one or two portraits, for which the student felt himself bound to present the country gentleman painter with a handsome saddle and bridle of his own make.¹⁴

Anne H. Wharton, paraphrasing from C. W. Peale's notes, writes:

Charles Peale says that he offered him one of his best saddles with its complete furniture if he would allow him to see him paint a picture. Mr. Hesselius accepted the offer, painting one half of the face of a portrait and leaving the other half for Peale to paint. He then saw Mr. Hesselius paint two portraits.¹⁰

From this time on there is no record of the artist until 1770 when he painted a portrait of Henry Fitzhugh. Then there is no record

until 1775 when he painted the portrait of the youthful Thomas Wetenhall Rozer. Again there is no record until 1777 when he painted the portrait of an old lady supposed to be Mrs. Gough.

John Hesselius died April 9, 1778, and was buried at Bellefield on the Severn River, a large estate which he devised to his son John, charged with legacies to his unmarried daughters Charlotte, Caroline, and Elizabeth.¹ It is interesting to note that, in his will, the artist misspelled his name "Heselius."⁶ Mrs. John Hesselius outlived the artist by many years. She died June 14, 1820, at the age of 81.¹

With the foregoing chronology in mind as an aid for the further study of John Hesselius and for the comparative study of portraits painted in Philadelphia, Maryland, and Virginia during the last half of the eighteenth century, the question may be asked: who were some of the professional contemporaries of John Hesselius? In other words, who were the artists whose work must be studied in conjunction with the work of John Hesselius in the case of unidentified portraits of this period? The names of four painters may be mentioned: Feke, Wollaston, West, and Durand.

Robert Feke, who flourished between 1705 and 1750, was certainly in Philadelphia about 1746, and is last recorded as being in that city, according to a diary entry dated 1750.¹⁵ The prolific John Wollaston, an English artist who painted in the Colonies between 1749 and 1767, worked in Philadelphia during 1758, for in September of that year Francis Hopkinson published a poetical tribute to that painter in the *American Magazine*. From then on until 1767 Wollaston painted in Philadelphia, Maryland, Virginia and South Carolina; and it was he who, by example if not by precept, was the main influence on John Hesselius. This influence, so apparent in portraits painted by John Hesselius during 1750 and later, indicates the appearance of John Wollaston in Philadelphia at a much earlier period than the time of the poetical tribute. Wollaston also had a slight influence on Benjamin West (1738-1820), who is eulogized in the concluding verses of Hopkinson's poetical tribute, in part, as follows: "Hail sacred *Genius!* may'st thou even tread, The pleasing paths your *Wollaston* has lead."¹⁶ Since Hopkinson definitely states "your" Wollaston there is more than a possibility that West had direct assistance from the

popular English visitor. The fourth contemporary to be mentioned is John Durand who, according to Thomas Sully: "painted an immense number of portraits in Virginia; his works are hard and dry," but "appear to have been strong likenesses."¹⁷

Of these contemporaries neither Feke nor Durand need be discussed here. Too little is known about the work of Durand, and whatever influence Feke had upon Hesselius pales before the strong influence of John Wollaston. It seems more profitable for the purposes of this brief survey to discuss Wollaston, West and John Hesselius in their relation to a single portrait.

Wollaston, West, and John Hesselius are all mentioned in connection with the three-quarter length portrait of Thomas Mifflin as a young man, owned by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The picture, dating from about 1759, has always been assigned to West until a few years ago when it was incorrectly attributed to Wollaston.¹⁸ A suggestion made more recently is that "one could believe that it was John Hesselius and not Wollaston" who painted the Mifflin portrait and still another portrait not here under discussion.¹⁹ However, the reassignment of the portrait to West by William Sawitzky may be taken as final.²⁰

The question then arises why is it possible to assign the names of three artists so readily to the same painting? The answer is found in the powerful mannerisms of John Wollaston, who is known to have painted about two hundred portraits. Of his mannerisms, the heavy lidded, almond shaped eyes in his round, faintly smiling portraits, are the most characteristic. This mannerism is found in a few very early portraits by Benjamin West and in almost all of the portraits of John Hesselius. There are also mannerisms of pose and expression in Wollaston's work.

But the drawing, technique, and color in portraits are as important as resemblances of pose and expression. Although the expression in the portrait of Thomas Mifflin bears a superficial resemblance to the expression in portraits by Wollaston, the drawing, technique and color bear slight resemblance to Wollaston's work. Such differences in the work of Wollaston, West, and John Hesselius, are clearly described in the article on the American work of Benjamin West by



*John Hesselius: Samuel Lloyd Chew
Bryn Mawr, Pa., Professor Samuel Claggett Chew Collection*



*John Hesselius: Portrait of Mrs. Thomas Gough (Sophia Dorsey) ?
Baltimore, Mrs. Arthur B. Keating Collection*



*John Hessclius: Ellinor Calvert
Baltimore, General Laurason Riggs Collection*



*John Hessclius: Elizabeth Calvert
Baltimore, General Laurason Riggs Collection*

William Sawitzky published recently in the *Pennsylvania Magazine*.²⁹ It is not necessary to repeat the admirable stylistic study of that article. Sawitzky points out that, in landscape backgrounds, Wollaston invariably used brown, that John Hesselius used "shades of brown and olive green," and that in this respect Benjamin West's "partiality to blue is even more pronounced in his landscape backgrounds." His notes on the drawing of the almond eyes in the portraits of John Wollaston, distinguishing three types, are most important, as are finally his notes on technique which include the important considerations of the relative thickness or thinness of the paint structure. Nothing need be added here except in the matter of signatures upon John Hesselius' work. The signatures are either in the form of careful inscriptions on the backs of the canvases or clear script letters on the painted surface. In the case of the Keteltas portraits the signatures are distinctly visible in red paint on the fronts of the canvases. But more important than signatures are the considerations as to drawing, brush work, and color. The reader is referred directly to the article by William Sawitzky as an indispensable basis for the discussion of portraits painted in the middle Atlantic colonies during the eighteenth century and as constituting the most important comparative study of the early American tradition of painting.

- ¹ Charles Henry Hart, Hesselius Family, *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, XXIX, (1905), 367.
- ² Charles Henry Hart, The Earliest Painter in America, *Harper's Magazine*, XCVI, (March, 1898), 566-570. An account of Gustavus Hesselius. 2 illus.
- ³ Anonymous, Gustavus Hesselius, *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, XXIX, (1905), 129-133. Based on notes supplied by Charles Henry Hart. 1 illus.
- ⁴ John W. Jordan, Early Colonial Organ-Builders of Pennsylvania, *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, XXII, (1898), 231-233.
- ⁵ Thomas W. Balch, *The Philadelphia Assemblies*, Philadelphia, 1916, 52.
- ⁶ Francis de Sales Dundas, *Dundas-Hesselius*, Philadelphia, 1938, 112.
- ⁷ Pennsylvania Museum of Art, *Gustavus Hesselius, 1682-1755, An Exhibition*, Philadelphia, 1938. Catalogue. Biography by C. Brinton, 7-8.
- ⁸ Elizabeth Hesselius Murray, *One Hundred Years Ago*, Philadelphia, 1895, 86.
- ⁹ Albert Henry Smyth, editor, *The Writings of Benjamin Franklin*, New York, 1905, 10 vols. III, 380, 423, 439.
- ¹⁰ Anne Hollingsworth Wharton, *Heirlooms in Miniatures*, Philadelphia, 1898, 35, 82.
- ¹¹ William Oswald Dundas, Young-Woodward-Hesselius Family Record, *Maryland Historical Magazine*, XXI, (Sept. 1926), 277-79.
- ¹² Vestry Proceedings of Saint Ann's Parish, Annapolis, Maryland, *Maryland Historical Magazine*, VII, (1912), 180, 182; X, (1915), 38-41.
- ¹³ Reverend Bennett Allen to Governor Horatio Sharp, March 30, 1768, *Maryland Archives*, XIV, 476.
- ¹⁴ Rembrandt Peale, *Reminiscences*, *Crayon*, Feb. 7, 1855, I, 82.
- ¹⁵ Henry Wilder Foote. *Robert Feke; Colonial Portrait Painter*, Cambridge, 1930.
- ¹⁶ Theodore Bolton and Harry Lorin Binsse, "Wollaston, an early American portrait Manufacturer," *Antiquarian*, June 1931. (Contains the first catalogue of Wollaston's portraits listing 133 pictures. William Sawitzky, in the article noted below, states that there are about 200 portraits extant and mentions a number not included in the above list, especially two portraits, one of William Peters and the other of William Plumstead, in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania which, he writes, "have been attributed to Gustavus Hesselius, John S. Copley, and Robert Feke respectively. In the writer's opinion they are thoroughly characteristic specimens of the work of Wollaston." The portrait of William Plumstead is reproduced in an article on Feke in the *Antiquarian*, October, 1930, p. 35, and is there attributed to that artist, but the attribution to Wollaston should now be accepted. William Sawitzky also notes that the portrait of Charles Willing, attributed to West, and reproduced in B. A. Konkle, *Thomas Willing*, where it is attributed to Hesselius, "shows the skilled routine work and all the mannerisms of John Wollaston.")
- ¹⁷ William Dunlap, *History of the Rise and Progress of the Arts of Design in the United States*, Boston, 1918, I, 169.
- ¹⁸ Pennsylvania Museum of Art, *Benjamin West, 1738-1820*, Philadelphia, 1938, Catalogue, Illus.
- ¹⁹ Alan Burroughs, *Limners and Likenesses*, Cambridge, 1936, 49.
- ²⁰ William Sawitzky, "The American Work of Benjamin West," *Pennsylvania Magazine*, LXII, (Oct. 1938), 433-462, 55 illus. [An exhaustive study containing (1) an account of the

artist's development; (2) a thoroughgoing comparative study of portraits by Gustavus Hesselius, Feke, John Hesselius, and Wollaston with portrait by West; and (3) a definitive catalogue. Two attributions of portraits to John Hesselius may be noted: (1) the portrait of Mary Keen (1730-1767) reproduced in T. A. Glenn, *Some Colonial Mansions*, (1900), 475, (without attribution); and (2) Joseph Shippen (1732-1810) reproduced in H. W. Foote, *Robert Feke*, (1930), 188 (there attributed to Feke). The Shippen portrait, destroyed by fire in 1923, was also attributed to West in *Hannah Logan's Courtship*, (1904), 266, but William Sawitzky, while agreeing with H. W. Foote that the portrait was not by West, does not share that writer's opinion that the portrait was by Feke and "wants at this time to register his impression that the painting was an early work of John Hesselius." The opinions of William Sawitzky are here considered as conclusive.]

NOTE: The manuscript collections of the following libraries have been searched without avail: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Library Company of Philadelphia, American Philosophical Society, and the New York Public Library. Newspapers for the year 1778 have been searched for an obituary notice, without success, at the New York Public Library, and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES

The following references have *not* been investigated:

—John Champe, Jr., in his will proved May 4, 1775, at King George County, gives to his daughter Ann "the last four pictures drawn by Hesselius, viz: Colonel Carter and Ann, his wife, and myself and Ann my wife." *Virginia Magazine of History*, XXXVIII, (1930), 365.
—Portraits of John Thornton, Alice Thornton, and son, born Feb. 9, 1748, said to be by Hesselius, are owned by Mrs. Martin, Fredericksburg. *Virginia Magazine of History*, XLII, (1934), 67.

—In an exhibition catalogue the following portraits are attributed to John Hesselius: John Page, Mrs. John Page, and Mrs. William Randolph. *Virginia Magazine of History*, XXXVII, (1929), 209. However the portrait of Mrs. John Page, née Jane Byrd, reproduced in A. W. Weddell, *Virginia Historical Portraiture*, Richmond, 1930, facing p. 208, is not convincing as the work of John Hesselius.

—The portrait of George Mason, said to have been painted by John Hesselius "as early as 1750" was later destroyed by fire. *Virginia Magazine of History*, XXXV, (1927), 59. The portraits of George Mason (1725-1792) and his wife, née Ann Eilbeck, painted about the time of their marriage in 1750, Stafford County, Virginia, are mentioned in K. M. Rowland, *Life of George Mason*, 1892, 2 vols., II, 157. The frontispiece to this volume is a portrait of George Mason but the artist is not stated.

—The will of William Fitzhugh notes a portrait inscribed: "Colonel William Fitzhugh, age 40, 1698. Copy by J. Hesselius." The Fitzhugh will also bequeaths "the other six pictures of my relations," to legatees. *Virginia Magazine of History*, VII, (1899-1900), 199.

—The "Family Picture" of Mrs. John Hesselius with two of her children and a circular picture of Elizabeth and Charlotte Hesselius said to be by John Hesselius are reproduced in E. H. Murray, *One Hundred Years Ago*, Philadelphia, 1895, facing 83, 92.

ADDENDA: All reproductions of John Hesselius' work are through the courtesy of the Frick Art Reference Library.

In our earlier article on John Jarvis, (*The Art Quarterly*, Autumn, 1938), figures 1, 3, and 5 were reproduced through the courtesy of the Frick Art Reference Library, while Figures 2, 4, and 7 were reproduced through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society.

THE AUTHORS.

A CATALOGUE OF PORTRAITS INSCRIBED AND SIGNED BY JOHN HESSELIUS

NOTE: The writers wish to thank the librarians at the Frick Art Reference Library for assistance that has made this list of portraits possible. They also desire to thank those owners of portraits who have given permission for their reproduction.

The portraits listed are either inscribed on the back or signed on the painting surface. In other words, no attempt has been made to investigate any of the unsigned portraits attributed to Hesselius. Dr. J. Hall Pleasants of Baltimore is preparing a monograph on the artist.

BOLTON, JOHN (1726-1784), of Philadelphia and Chestertown, Md. About 29 x 24 inches. Inscription on back: "John Bolton, 2nd son of Robt.," and "J. Hesselius 1759." Owners: The Misses Booth, "Midhope," Haverford, Penna.

BROWN, MRS. GUSTAVUS, née MARGARET BLACK (born 1710) of "Rose Hill," Port Tobacco, Charles County, Md. About 29½ x 24½ inches. Relined. Inscription on back: "Margaret Brown 2d wife of Gustavus Brown AEtatis 41—1751—John Hesselius Pinx." Photograph of inscription, covered by relining, at F. A. R. L. Owner: Baltimore Museum of Art. First described by Dr. J. Hall Pleasants.

CALVERT, ANN (born 1755). 30 x 25 inches. Note on F. A. R. L. photograph: "... too far gone to be restored." Inscription on back: "Ann Calvert AE 6 John Hesselius Pinx Maryland—1761." Owners: (1) Lady Calvert; (2) Honorico Razzolini who took this with other portraits to Italy in the 18th century; (3) brought from the Loredan family, Italy, in 1925 by General Lawrason Riggs of Baltimore. The history of this and the other Calvert portraits is given in the *New York Times*, March 28, 1926.

CALVERT, CHARLES (1756-1777) AND NEGRO BOY SERVANT. 50 x 40 inches. Inscription on back: "Charles Calvert AE 5 John Hesselius, Pinx, Maryland—1761—." Owners: same as foregoing entry. Reproductions (herewith): (1) *Fine Arts*, June 1933, XX, 27; (2) Catalogue, *Exhibition of American Paintings*, M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco, June 7-July 7, 1935, pl. 14; (3) Washington County Museum of Fine Arts, Hagerstown, Maryland, *Bulletin*, Sept. 1, 1937, III, 5; (4) A. Burroughs, *Limners and Likenesses*, 1936, fig. 43.

CALVERT, ELIZABETH (born about 1754) possibly twin of Ellinor Calvert. *q. v.*, married Charles Stewart. 30 x 25 inches. Inscription on back: "Elizabeth Calvert AE 8 John Hesselius Pinx, Maryland—1761." Owners: Same as the two foregoing portraits. Relined and inscription copied. Reproduced herewith.

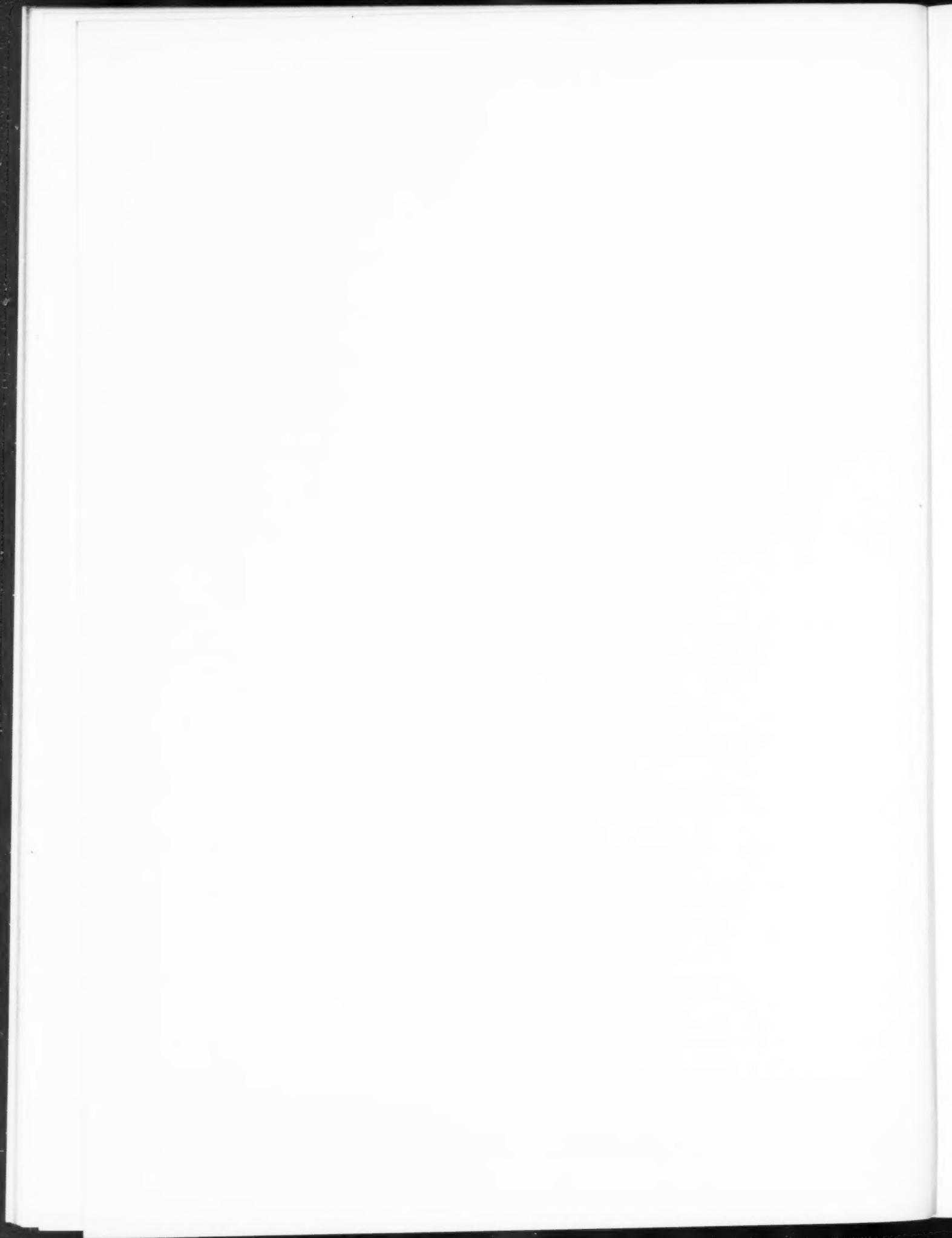
CALVERT, ELLINOR (1754-1811). 30 x 25 inches. Inscription on back: "Ellinor Calvert AE 8 John Hesselius Pinx, Maryland—1761." Owners: Same as the three foregoing portraits. Reproduced herewith.

CHEW, SAMUEL LLOYD (1737-1790) member of the Maryland Revolutionary Convention, 1775, from Anne Arundel County; captain of 3d Maryland Regiment, 1776-1777. About 38 x 30 inches. Inscription on back: "Samuel Chew Aetat 25, J. Hesselius Pinx. 1762." Owner: Prof. Samuel Claggett Chew, Bryn Mawr, Penna. First noted by Dr. J. Hall Pleasants. Reproduced herewith.

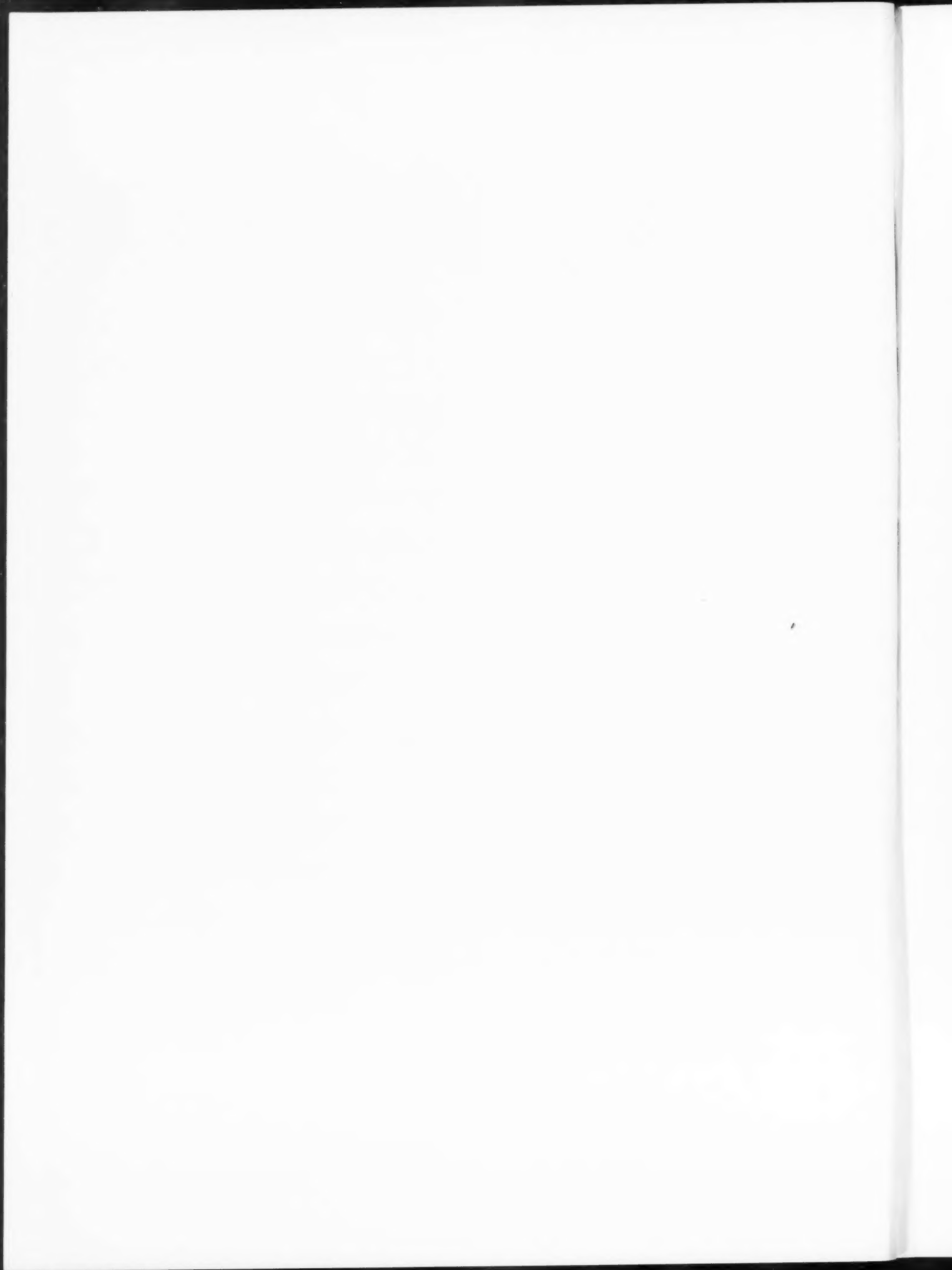
CHEW, MRS. SAMUEL, née SARAH LOCK (1720-1791). 28¼ x 25 inches. Inscription on back: "Sarah Chew Aetat. 41. J. Hesselius, Pinx 1762." Owner: Prof. Samuel Claggett Chew, Bryn Mawr, Penna. First noted by Dr. J. Hall Pleasants.

FITZHUGH, HENRY (1686/7-1758). About 30 x 24¾ inches. Relined. Inscription on back, covered by, but copied on relining: "Capt. Henry Fitzhugh, son Col^l. Will^m Fitzhugh, Aetat 70, 1756, J. Hesselius Pinx." Owner: Miss Lizzie G. Rennolds, Fredericksburg, Va.

- FITZHUGH, HENRY (1747-1815) of "Bellair," son of John Fitzhugh. 30 x 25 inches. Relined. Inscription, on back of canvas, covered by but copied on relining: "Henry Fitzhugh son of John, Aetat 22. J. Hesselius Pinx 1770 June 29." Owner: Miss Lizzie G. Rennolds, Fredericksburg, Va.
- FITZHUGH, JOHN (1727-1809). 30 x 25 inches. Relined. Inscription on back of canvas, covered by but copied on relining: "John Fitzhugh, son of Henry Fitzhugh. Aetatis 24. John Hesselius Pinx. 1751." Owner: Miss Lizzie G. Rennolds.
- FITZHUGH, MRS. JOHN, née ALICE THORNTON (1729-1790) daughter of Rowland Thornton of "Crowes," King George County. 30 x 25 inches. Relined. Inscription on back, covered by relining: "Alice wife of John Fitzhugh and daughter of Rowland Thornton. Aetatis 22. John Hesselius Pinx, May 1751." Owner: Miss Lizzie G. Rennolds, Fredericksburg, Va.
- GORDON, MRS. JAMES, née MILLICENT CONWAY. 50 x 40 inches. Signed at the right: "J. Hesselius, Pt. 1750." Owner: J. W. Gordon, "Bon Air," Chesterfield County, Va.
- GOUGH, MRS. THOMAS, née SOPHIA DORSEY, possibly a portrait of. 30 x 25 inches. Inscription on back: "J. Hesselius Pinx. 1777." Owner: Mrs. Arthur B. Keating, Baltimore, Md. First noted by Dr. J. Hall Pleasants. Reproduced herewith.
- KETELTAS, REVEREND ABRAHAM (1732-1798). 29 x 34 inches. Signed lower right: "J. Hesselius Pinxt 1758." Owners: Miss Maude K. Wetmore and Miss Edith Wetmore, New York City.
- KETELTAS, MRS. ABRAHAM, née SARAH SMITH (1733-1815). 29 x 34 inches. Signed lower left: "J. Hesselius Pinxt 1758." Owners: Miss Maude K. Wetmore and Miss Edith Wetmore, New York City.
- MADDOX, JOSHUA (1684/5-1754/9?). 49 x 38 inches. Relined. Inscription on back of original: "J. Hesselius Pinxt 1751." Owner: Willing Spencer, Philadelphia.
- MADDOX, MRS. JOSHUA, née MARY RUDDEROW (1681-1783). 49 x 38 inches. Inscription on back, covered by relining: "J. Hesselius pinxt 1751." Owner: Willing Spencer, Philadelphia.
- MARSH, THOMAS, Justice of Queen Anne County, Md., 1755-1758. Three quarter length. Signed lower right: "J. Hesselius Pinx 1760." Owner: Dr. Walter Wickes, Brooklandville, Md. First described by Dr. J. Hall Pleasants.
- ROZER, THOMAS WHETENHALL (1758-1785), son of Henry Rozer (1726-1802) of "Notley Hall," Prince George's County, Md. Inscription on back: "Thomas Whetenhall Rozer Aetat 16-1775. Painted by John Hesselius 1775." Owner: Mrs. Francis Carroll Goldsborough, Easton, Md. First noted by Dr. J. Hall Pleasants.
- SMITH, MRS. ELIZABETH, née ELIZABETH CHEW (born 1742 or 1743). 28½ x 25 inches. Inscription on back: "Elizabeth Smith AEtat 19. J. Hesselius Pinx 1762." Owner: Prof. Samuel Claggett Chew, Bryn Mawr, Penna. First noted by Dr. J. Hall Pleasants.
- WALLACE, JOHN (1717-1783), founder of Saint Andrew's Society, Philadelphia, 1749; member of the City Council, Philadelphia, 1755-1756. 42 x 32 inches. Inscription on back: "J. Hesselius pinxt 1751." Owner: Willing Spencer, Philadelphia.
- WALLACE, MRS. JOHN, née MARY MADDOX (1732-1784). 42¼ x 32½ inches. Inscription on back: "J. Hesselius Pinxt 1751." Owner: Willing Spencer, Philadelphia.

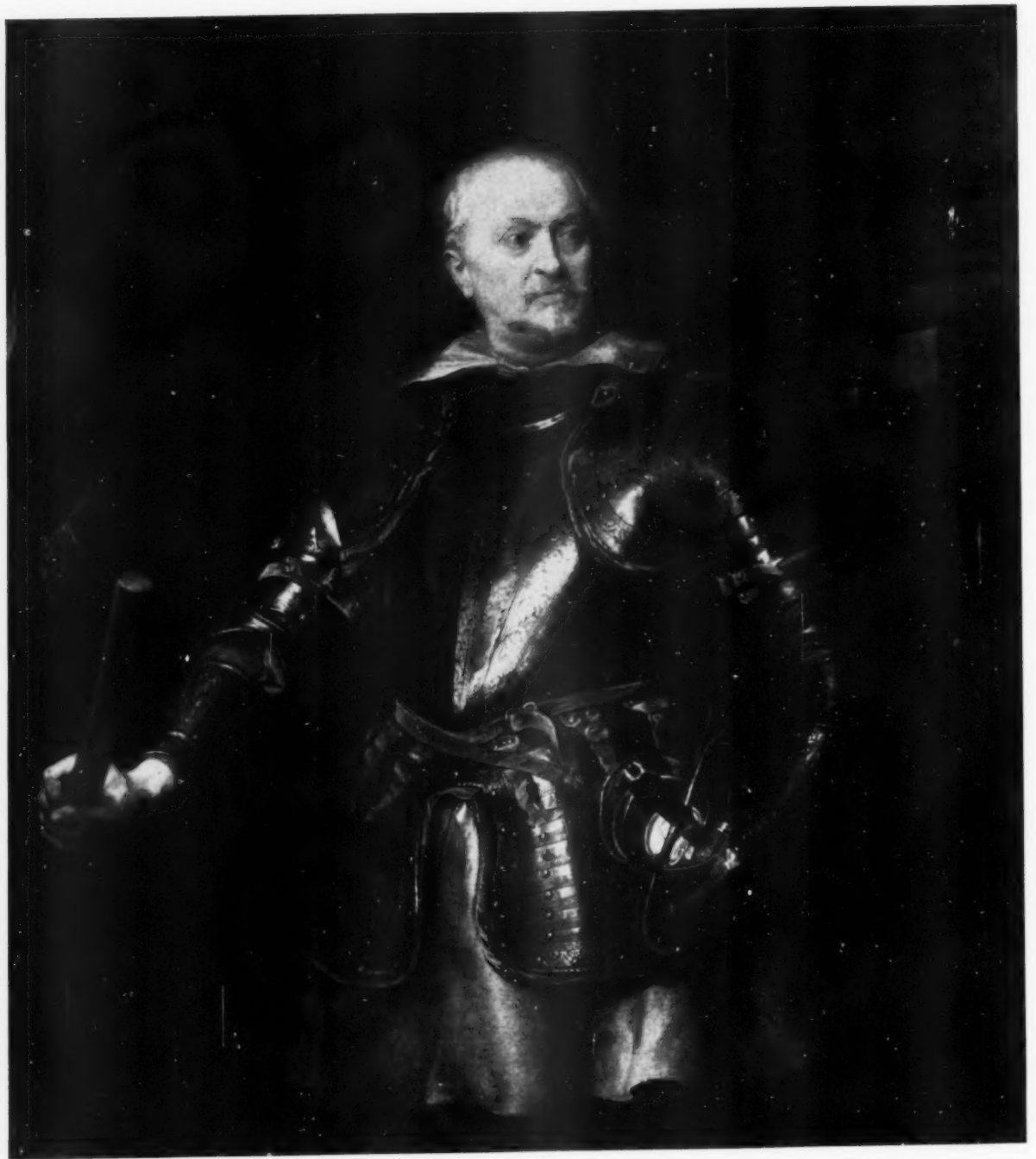


A PORTFOLIO OF PICTURES
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Andrea Mantegna: Tarquin and the Cumaean Sybil



Anthony van Dyck: Portrait of John of Nassau



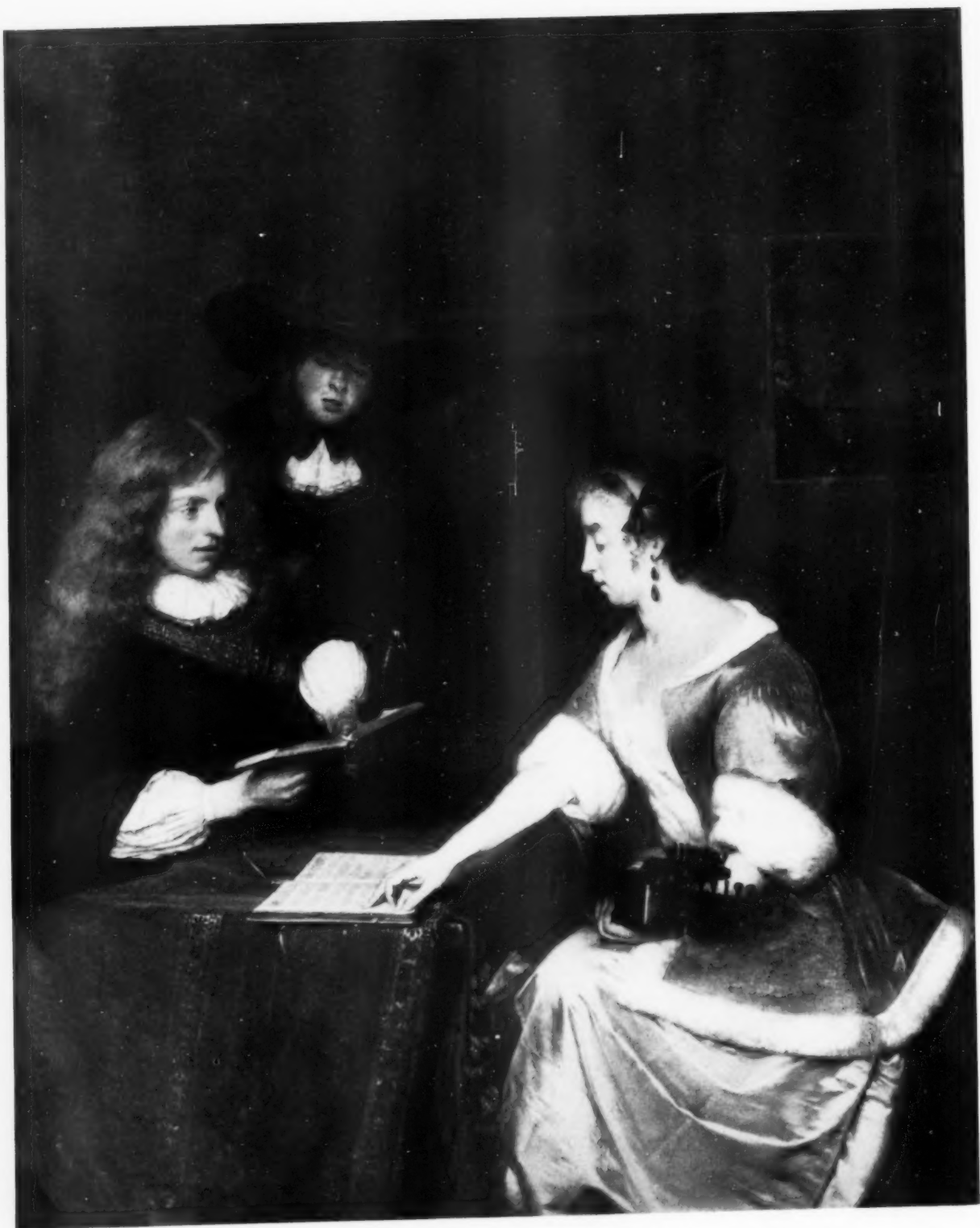
Joos van Cleve: Portrait of Francis I



Bartolome Esteban Murillo: St. Thomas Dividing His Clothes Among Beggar Boys



Thomas Gainsborough: Portrait of Mrs. Philip Thicknesse



Gerard Terborch: A Music Party